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Gender Statistics and Gender Mainstreaming of the Statistical System of North Macedonia

Gender analysis

North Macedonia

2022



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Skopje, 2022

Publisher

Reactor - Research in Action

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This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union and co-funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Reactor – Research in Action and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Implemented by:



CIP - Каталогизација во публикација
Национална и универзитетска библиотека "Св. Климент Охридски",
Скопје

305(497.7)"2020/2022"(047.31)
314.177.1:305(497.7)"2020/2022"(047.31)

IVANOVA, Tanja
Gender Statistics and Gender Mainstreaming of the Statistical System
of North Macedonia [Електронски извор] : Gender analysis / [authors
Tanja Ivanova, Vaska Leshoska, Irina Jolevska]. - Текст во PDF формат,
содржи 91 стр., илустр. - Скопје : Reactor - research in action, 2022. -
73 стр. ; 21 см

Начин на пристапување (URL): <http://www.reactor.org.mk> (Слободен
пристап). - Фусноти кон текстот. - Наслов преземен од екранот. - Опис
на
изворот на ден 19.08.2022

ISBN 978-608-4684-45-9

1. Гл. ств. насл.
а) Родови студии -- Статистика -- Македонија -- 2020-2022 --
Истражувања

COBISS.MK-ID 58004229

Skopje, 2022

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Abbreviations

ACCMIS	Automated Courts Case Management Information System
Census 2021	Census of Population Households and Dwellings in the Republic of North Macedonia 2021
CLIP	Country Level Implementation Plan
CoP	European statistics Code of Practice
CoP	European Statistics Code of Practice
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EQLS	European Quality of Life Survey
ESS	European Statistical System
ESS	European Statistical System
EU	European Union
EU	European Union
EU GAP	European Union Gender Action Plan
Eurofound	European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
EWCS	European Working Conditions Survey
FRA	European Union Fundamental Rights Agency
GBV	Gender-based violence
GBV law	Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence
GREVIO	Group of experts on action against violence against women and domestic violence
IPA	Instrument of Pre-Accession
Istanbul Convention	Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
JRC	Joint Research Centre
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LSS	Law on State Statistics
MIM	Macedonian Information Magistral
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
NPAA	National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire
NSS	National statistical system

OECD	European Commission and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD
SAA	Stabilization and the Association Agreement
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SILC	Survey on Income and Living Conditions
SSO	State Statistical Office of North Macedonia
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UN	United Nations
WCOS	Women Civil Society Organization
WMID	Women and Men in Decision Making Database

Executive Summary

Gender mainstreaming of the national statistical system

1. The State Statistical Office of North Macedonia as a coordinative authority of the official statistical system recognizes the need for gender statistics and has expressed its commitment to produce and disseminate gender statistics. Despite the efforts invested, gender mainstreaming of the overall national statistics remains fragmented and not yet fully formalized or recognised as a distinct responsibility by all the official data providers within the national statistical system; a centralised coordinative mechanism for national gender statistics is still lacking.
2. Diverse sources, including the State Statistical Office Strategic Plan (2021-2023)¹, confirm that the State Statistical Office of North Macedonia (SSO) faces significant employee turnover and is generally understaffed. This is mainly due to lack of financial resources to retain highly skilled and trained staff and it also represents a significant challenge to the prospect of establishing a separate unit or a dedicated focal point that would be fully responsible for coordinating and harmonising gender statistics at national level.
3. Current national practices narrowly recognize gender statistics as data that is disaggregated² by sex. Further efforts and systematic deliberations are needed for the official statistics to reflect acute gender issues, intersectionality, diversity, and cognizance about potential gender biases in the processes of collecting, processing, storing, and presenting statistical data.
4. The dialogue between SSO, as a producer of statistical data, and the national policymakers, as users of statistics, is already established and valued within the existing policy processes; however, this producer-user dialogue is also marked by institutional power asymmetries between different bodies within the official statistical system, i.e. the current position of the SSO within the government hierarchy provides space for critical bottlenecks and barriers and poses a challenge to SSO when it comes to coordinating and monitoring national statistics and relevant practices. These can affect SSO's efforts to coordinate the production of gender statistics across diverse administrative sources or to

1 State Statistical Office. Strategic Plan 2021-2023. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3zFvQYS>

2 Throughout the analysis we use 'gender-disaggregated data' to delaminate what is usually referred to as 'sex disaggregated data'.

guarantee for data coherence, timeliness, and punctuality. Therefore, additional efforts are needed for a more fluent and proactive dialogue, as well as improved decision making and development of gender equality policies that rely upon systematic and timely gender statistics, and overarching gender equality goals.

5. Official gender statistics are utilized to inform the national gender equality policies and they are included in the official strategic documents to some extent. However, there is an imperative need for a more coherent national structure of clearly defined gender equality policy objectives to systematically inform the needs for gender statistics and foster SSO's efforts to monitor and evaluate important trends and changes over time. Additionally, all policies and decision making need to be tailored around available statistics.
6. Moreover, the current Programme of Statistical Surveys³ (the Programme), a by-law that determines the statistical surveys implemented within a five-year period and specifies the authorised bodies that collect, process and disseminate statistics using statistical standards, methods and techniques, misses to reflect the needs for gender statistics at overall and specific level. The next Programme for the period 2023 – 2028 is in the process of preparation and there is a potential to mainstream gender throughout the whole document and strengthen the consultative processes behind. The Programme of Statistical Surveys lists all statistical surveys that produce official statistics, therefore it is essential to: include the necessary gender disaggregated indicators across already existing national surveys (for ex. In the field of agriculture, industry, employment, earnings, etc...) as well as introduce mandatory national surveys that explore gender inequalities and provide fresh evidence for gender responsiveness of vital policies and programmes.
7. In line with the above, we need to call attention to the limited availability of disaggregated gender statistics at the level of statistical regions and municipalities, which are crucial for better-quality decision making and gender informed local policies. Therefore, further considerations should be made to determine what is technically feasible to improve the availability of gender statistics for smaller administrative units, like municipalities.
8. Analysing the wider set up of the national statistical system and authorised bodies that comprise it, we can conclude that, with the exception to SSO, gender statistics are not recognized as a wider and important concept within the operative practices of the responsible national bodies that collect, process and disseminate diverse statistics. The “catalogue” of available gender-disaggregated data from other authorized bodies for state statistics, collected

3 State Statistical Office. Five-year Statistical Programme, 2018-2022. Available at: <https://www.stat.gov.mk/pdf/FiveYearProgramme2018-2022.pdf>

and compiled throughout this analysis, indicates a limited range of available variables and lack of systematic (intra- and inter-institutional) data collection that imposes a considerable challenge to important comparisons and data analysis in general.

9. Moreover, some of the authorized bodies that collect, process and disseminate statistics often fail to fulfil their obligations and publish updated publicly available records of gender-disaggregated statistics, and thus not only hinder third parties from exercising their rights to publicly available information but also have impact on the quality of the decision making and policy drafting processes, especially when it comes to addressing gender inequalities throughout different sectors.

Available Gender Statistics

1. The State Statistical Office's dedication to gender statistics is embodied in the annual publication *Women and Men in North Macedonia*⁴. So far, twelve editions have been regularly published and they are entirely focused on gender statistics based on data collected by the SSO. Through this publication, SSO tries to provide an insight into the demographic characteristics of women and men in the Republic of North Macedonia and their participation in the social and economic life of the country. However, there is a solid potential to broaden the overview of the available gender statistics within the publication and address the lack of data in crucial spheres, like for example gender disaggregated data on unpaid labour or gender inequalities in time use, power and decision making, and, as last but not least, gender-based violence. Currently, the economic inequalities are presented only in terms of labour force participation and employment and there is lack of data on key gender gaps, more specifically on gender pay gap, gender pension gap and gaps in ownerships.
2. *Women and Men in North Macedonia* relies upon statistical surveys conducted within the mandate of SSO, as the last publication introductory notes also confirm.⁵ Listed sources mention the Institute for Public Health (in the case of abortion rates) but none of the other authorized bodies for state statistics. We strongly recommend the inclusion of other authorised bodies as possible sources for enriching the content of this publication further, in line with the prevalent commitment of the SSO for 'ever-developing gender statistics' mentioned within the same publication and in the official Programme.

4 State Statistical Office. *Women and Men in North Macedonia*, 2020. Available at: https://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPoslednaPublikacija_en.aspx?id=23

5 State Statistical Office. *Women and Men in North Macedonia*, 2020. Available at: <https://www.stat.gov.mk/publikacii/2021/Gender%202021.WEB.pdf>

3. *Women and Men in North Macedonia* is offering an overview of available gender statistics; however, interpretations of implying gender inequalities are limited and there is a lack of correlation between the gender equality policies and the publication itself, since it does not reflect changes over time. This may be attributed to the lack of broader institutional attentiveness for gender impact assessments or gender evaluation based on official statistics and lack of clearly defined and measurable gender equality goals within the public policies. Efforts should be made to interpret available gender statistics and changes over time in closer reference to the actual policy framework.
4. Furthermore, *Women and Men in North Macedonia* reports data disaggregated by age, type of settlement, educational attainment, parenting status, and so on. Still, it does not recognise the concept of intersectional inequalities as such.
5. SSO's MakStat Database contains a dedicated folder on gender statistics with 70 gender indicators in total. The time series data were recently updated to cover data until 2020, and we strongly encourage SSO to continue its regular update in consistence with the publication calendar of the relevant surveys. The list of indicators lacks organization by thematic areas and it allows users a focused though limited overview of the available gender statistics. The availability of gender statistics on the level of municipalities is furthered with the Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of North Macedonia, 2021 (Census, 2021) data published on the MakStat database. At the time of writing this analysis, SSO published 34 datasets from the 2021 Census in total, containing gender-disaggregated data, 32 of which contain gender-disaggregated data on the level of municipalities.

Gender Equality Index

1. The State Statistical Office and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy published the first National Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia in 2019. The Index was calculated based on the methodology and framework of the Gender Equality Index for 2017, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The Index operationalizes the complex reality of gender equality as a multidimensional construct. It is composed of 31 indicators, which make up the six domains -work, money, knowledge, time, power and health. The original framework of the Index includes satellite domains on violence and intersectional inequalities but the Macedonian edition lacks data on violence and intersectionality.
2. On EU level the Index has 6 editions so far, the last measurement covering 2021. For North Macedonia, this year a new, second edition of the Gender

Equality Index is expected to be published. The comprehensive conceptual and methodological framework of the Gender Equality Index, tailored to be integral to EU gender equality policy goals and to offer comparable tracking of progress can be a good start to see where we are and to connect gender statistics with gender equality policy goals. Available administrative data from national institutions that could be used to inform gender equality policies

3. Availability of gender-disaggregated administrative data produced by other national institutions in the exercise of their powers (Article 5) is limited.
4. The central public sector data catalogue that needs to list all data produced within the exercise of power of the authorised public institutions currently has only two data sets containing gender-disaggregated data.
5. Confounding indications imply that the official case management IT systems of the Judiciary and the Prosecution may not be sufficiently adapted to enable disaggregation of data by gender.

Introduction and Scope of Work

The regional EU Action *Furthering Gender Equality through the Accession Process*, funded by the EU and SIDA, and led by Reactor – Research in Action and implemented with the partner organizations Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (North Macedonia office), Kosovo Women’s Network (Kosovo), AWEN (Albania), Right for All (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Women’s Rights Center (Montenegro), aims to enhance and broaden existing regional cooperation to strengthen participatory democracies and to bring about an inclusive and gender-sensitive accession process. Its specific objectives are to: to enhance WCSO capacities to effectively engage with governments, EU Delegations and offices (EUD/EUO), local (women) civil society organizations ((W)CSOs) and other (W)CSOs in the region, making all involved actors aware of the gender dimensions of the EU Accession process; and to improve accountability of governments and EUD/EUO in implementing commitments to gender equality and women’s rights during the EU Accession process. As part of the planned outputs, this Action foresees three sectoral gender analyses to be published throughout its duration (2020 – 2024) in each partner country, and this document is the first of these analyses in North Macedonia.

At present, North Macedonia is lacking specific, up-to date and comprehensive gender analysis for thematic areas and sectors related to the Stabilization and the Association Agreement (SAA) and the overall EU Accession national processes, including IPA III funding windows. Therefore, this analysis aims to contribute to these processes and narrow the existing gap in available evidence on the stance of gender equality, as well as contribute to the GAP III objective to provide gender knowledge and expertise through research that would further gender mainstreaming and the implementation of this strategic document and the related Country Level Implementation Plan (CLIP).⁶

Assessing the needs for a gender analysis and mapping the knowledge

Following the consultations held with the key national stakeholders, namely the Delegation of the EU, the Secretariat for European Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in North Macedonia, in the period between December 2020 and March 2021, it was unanimously concluded that statistics is a vital area when it comes to gender mainstreaming at national level

⁶ European Commission. EU gender action plan (GAP) III. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/topics/empowering-women-and-girls_en#header-5139

and gender sensitive statistics and disaggregated data are much needed and at the same time often lacking.

“Gender statistics and indicators integrate a gender perspective in the collection, analysis and presentation of statistical data. Gender statistics play a key role in measuring gender gaps on the basis of agreed indicators that are relevant to the lives of women and men.”⁷ Statistics produced in this way can be used to measure gaps in different policy areas such as the labour market, education, health, etc. They can provide factual and relevant data to address gender inequalities when planning and creating policies and programmes at overall level but also at the level of sectors.

The State Statistical office of North Macedonia is regularly producing sex-desegregated data for about 70 indicators and related sub indicators. These include general data on population, education, technology, labour market, justice and politics. Produced data is mainly aligned with the Eurostat indicators, since North Macedonia is a candidate country and as such it is obliged to follow the framework bases of the European regulation (EC) No 223/2009⁸ and the principles set by the European Statistics Code of Practice⁹. Additionally, the State Statistical office publishes reports on annual and multi-annual basis, which include a predefined scope of data on women and men in a more systematic way. However, while these data are generally sex-desegregated, they are not gender mainstreamed; in other words, a gendered perspective that provides direct and easily measurable insight in the gender gaps behind the collected and published data is often not considered.

Moreover, the country is obliged to collect administrative data on specific issues that are also often related to the national commitments to international legal documents. Such an example is the requirement for data collection and analysis implied by the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210)¹⁰. This type of data is usually provided by the administrative units at national level which are authorized and obliged to feed information to the system of state statistics. Currently, these are: National Bank of the Republic North Macedonia, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Pension & Disability Insurance Fund, Employment Agency, Institute for Public Health, and the National Hydrometeorological Service.¹¹

Bearing in mind the complexity and the horizontal nature of the national statistics, this document narrows down the explorations and focuses on the State Statistical Office and the

7 EIGE, “What are gender statistics”. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/gender-statistics-indicators>

8 Available here: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32009R0223&from=EN>

9 Available here: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4031688/8971242/KS-02-18-142-EN-N.pdf/e7f85f07-91db-4312-8118-f729c75878c7?t=1528447068000>

10 European Commission. Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (CETS No. 210). Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/168008482e>

11 SSO. “Authorized carriers of data to the state statistical system”. Available list here: <https://www.stat.gov.mk/NSO.aspx>

main carriers, i.e. providers of state statistics, while trying to identify the unmet needs and provide an overview on the current state of play.

Research questions, framework of analysis and data collection methods

The analysis is twofold in focus and guided by two research questions:

1. How to gender mainstream the national statistical system?
2. What are the priority areas that lack gender statistics?

To answer these research questions, we conducted:

- Analysis of the legal and institutional framework of the official statistical system and the national legislation relevant for gender statistics with brief overview of EU legislation, strategic and policy documents related to gender statistics
- Analysis of the existing practices relevant to the production and dissemination of gender statistics, in dialogues with SSO representatives
- Analysis of available gender statistics through overview of Women and Men in North Macedonia and Gender indicators- Makstat data base
- Analysis of available gender-disaggregated data from authorized bodies for state statistics
- Analysis of possible administrative sources for gender-disaggregated data outside of the official statistical system.

To envision what can be done in terms of enriching gender statistics we explored the work of the Statistics Sweden i.e. the Swedish government agency responsible for producing official statistics. We chose Statistics Sweden as a model for concluding best practices because the Swedish agency has a rich tradition of more than 30 years of developing, producing and disseminating gender statistics and because our State Statistical Office currently has a cooperation project with Statistics Sweden, financed by Sida

Several data collection methods were used to inform the research questions:

- Secondary data analysis
- In-depth interviews and group discussions

- Publicly available statistical data-base analyses
- Freedom of information requests

Two group interviews were conducted with a total of six representatives from the SSO of North Macedonia, including key responsible staff and the Director General. With Statistics Sweden we conducted one group interview including two representatives from the Agency, a representative from SIDA and two representatives from the ongoing technical assistance project, a cooperation between the SSO and Statistics Sweden, financed by SIDA. Informal interviews were also made with a number of CSOs and institutions, during the collection of publicly accessible information (through freedom of information requests).

In total eight freedom of information requests to authorised bodies for state statistics were sent and we received responses from five.

All documents and data bases that were analysed are referenced throughout the text.

Legal and Policy Analysis

This section examines and assesses the relevant legal and policy framework of the national statistical system from a gender perspective, including the extent of harmonization of national legislation with the relevant EU law. The analysis first examines the relevant national law and provides an overview of the organizational structure that supports and monitors the production and dissemination of gender statistics. Then, it turns to the EU acquis related to gender statistics. It ends with a brief overview of international law and of the obligations and political commitments of national institutions deriving from the international legal instruments.

State statistics and gender statistics – national legal framework

Law on State Statistics

The Law on State Statistics¹² (LSS) is *lex generalis* on statistics in North Macedonia. It regulates the organization and area of work of state statistics in general, the methodological and organizational bases of statistical surveys, the collection, processing, presentation, storage, protection and dissemination of statistical data.¹³ The LSS defines state statistics as an independent professional activity, conducted on a scientific basis, which provides users with data on the economy, demography, social life, environmental protection and other areas.¹⁴

The State Statistical Office (SSO) performs the principal tasks and activities regarding state statistics in North Macedonia by carrying out statistical surveys and by obtaining data from data set holders.¹⁵ Statistical surveys are also conducted by the National Bank of the Republic of North Macedonia and other authorized bodies listed in a by-law named statistical surveys programme. Namely, according to the Five-Year Statistical Programme 2018-2022¹⁶, aside from the SSO and the National Bank, seven additional entities are

12 Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18.

13 Ibid. Art. 1.

14 Ibid. Art. 2.

15 Ibid. Art. 5.

16 Five-Year Statistical Programme, 2018-2022. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Republic of Macedonia No.22/18, 224/8 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.18/20.

currently authorized to implement statistical surveys: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Employment Agency, Institute for Public Health, Hydrometeorological Service and Pension and Disability Insurance Fund.

Even though the LSS dates back to 1997, it has been substantially amended several times since. One of the strengths of the national statistical system is that the statistical legislation and primarily the LSS is modern, comprehensive and in most part aligned with the European Statistics Code of Practice.¹⁷

Nevertheless, by analysing the LSS from a gender perspective, it should be noted that in its current form, this law does not mention, define or stipulate any obligations for institutions regarding sex or gender-disaggregated data or gender statistics. In comparison, in Sweden, since the mid-1990s, statistical data are required to be disaggregated by sex.¹⁸ Namely, Section 14 of the Swedish Official Statistics Ordinance (2001:100) states that official statistics related to individuals are to be disaggregated by sex, unless there are specific reasons for not doing so.¹⁹ Moreover, Statistics Sweden has also produced guidelines to support the application of Section 14.

Five-Year Statistical Programme 2018-2022

The Five-Year Statistical Programme, 2018-2022²⁰ (hereinafter Programme) was adopted by the Government of North Macedonia in 2018 and has been amended three times since. The Programme is a by-law that determines which statistical surveys will be implemented and lists all surveys that would produce official statistics for a period of five years. The Programme is drafted in accordance with the principles of the European Statistics Code of Practice and aims to provide comparable data on the development of the country as the basis for an informed EU accession process.

A total of 319 statistical surveys are included in the current Programme, implemented by the nine authorized bodies listed in the section above. It is organized in three domains: demographic and social statistics, economic statistics and environment

17 Alldritt, R., de Pourbaix, I. & Carlquist, T. (2017). Peer Review on the Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the coordination role of the State Statistical Office, p.10. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3jD4hJH>

18 Interview with representatives from Statistics Sweden held on 23.11.2021.

19 Statistics Sweden (2020). Women and Men in Sweden 2020, Facts and figures, p.5. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3kho0yt>

20 Five-Year Statistical Programme, 2018-2022. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Republic of Macedonia No.22/18, 224/8 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.18/20.

and multi-domain statistics. In the text of the Programme, data disaggregated by sex is mentioned in the short description of 48 out of the 319 foreseen statistical surveys.²¹

Strategic Plan 2021-2023

The Strategic Plan 2021-2023²² regulates the strategic priorities of the SSO for a period of three years. The implementation of the Strategic Plan is intended to ensure that the obligations of the SSO defined in the Programme are met and that the strategic priorities of the Government for EU integration are accomplished.²³ For the forthcoming years, the SSO defined four priorities: integration of the Macedonian statistical system into the European statistical system, strengthening of the institutional environment and the statistical infrastructure, development of strategic partnerships, and quality management.²⁴

21 Data disaggregated by sex is mentioned in the short description of the statistical surveys on: births, deaths, immigrated persons, emigrated persons, emigrated and immigrated foreigners, population estimates, unemployed people, accidents at work, occupational diseases, adult primary and lower secondary schools – beginning of the school year, art primary and lower secondary schools – beginning of the school year, adult primary and lower secondary schools – end of the school year, primary and lower secondary schools – end of the school year, primary and lower secondary schools where the language of instruction is different from Macedonian language – end of the school year, art primary and lower secondary schools – end of the school year, upper secondary schools – beginning of the school year, upper secondary schools – end of the school year, upper secondary schools where the language of instruction is different from Macedonian language – end of the school year, teachers and supporting staff in higher education institutions in the academic year, enrolled students in undergraduate studies (first cycle) at faculties and higher vocational schools in the academic year, graduated students from undergraduate studies (first cycle) at faculties and higher vocational schools, persons who have acquired a master's or specialist degree, persons enrolled in the second cycle of studies (master or specialist studies) in the academic year, Doctors of Science (who have defended a doctoral thesis), persons enrolled in the third cycle of studies (doctoral studies) in the academic year, organizational structure and staff in health care institutions, reported cases of brucellosis, reported cases of HIV/AIDS, reported cases of communicable diseases, reported microbiologically isolated/detected pathogens of infectious diseases and resistance to antibiotics, recipients of social welfare, institutions for children and juveniles with educational and social difficulties, institutions for children lacking parental care, institutions for care of persons with disabilities, business entities for employment of disabled persons, institutions for adult and elderly care, contribution payers and insured persons with paid contribution according to branch offices, new pensioners and deceased pensioners, institutions for care and education of children – kindergartens/centres for early childhood development, institutions for care and educations of children – kindergartens/centres for early childhood development in settlements, recipients of allowances, reported adult perpetrators, accused and convicted adult perpetrators, reported juvenile perpetrators, accused and convicted juvenile perpetrators, structure of earnings, employees and wages (annual) and research and development in business entities, public sector and private non-profit organizations, higher education.

22 State Statistical Office. Strategic Plan 2021-2023. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3zFvQYS>

23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

The Strategic Plan contains a paragraph dedicated to the gender structure of the employees of the SSO and a declaration that the SSO applies the principle of equal opportunities for women and men. The document also contains information on IPA 2017 funded activities for the implementation of a gender-based violence survey, which has not been conducted yet; the Women and Men in North Macedonia²⁵ publication is mentioned as well. The Strategic Plan does not contain any further information or strategic priorities defined pertaining to gender equality and gender statistics.

Nonetheless, the four strategic priorities previously listed could be viewed through a gender equality lens. For example, the strategic priority concerning the integration of the Macedonian statistical system into the European implies the production of gender statistics comparable to the gender statistics of the European statistical system. Furthermore, the strengthening of the institutional environment and the statistical infrastructure is a prerequisite for the production, proper analysis, presentation and dissemination of gender statistics in a useful manner, both for policy makers, as well as for a wide range of users.

Organizational structure of the national statistical system

The national statistical system is consisted of three principal bodies that coordinate, support and monitor the production and dissemination of data and, inter alia, of gender statistics: State Statistical Office, Statistical Council and Coordination Committee. The SSO has the main coordination role in the existing organizational structure of the Macedonian statistical system. On the other hand, the Statistical Council and the Coordination Committee are expert advisory bodies, with members appointed by the national Assembly and the Government respectively. Their structure and key responsibilities are discussed below.

State Statistical Office

The role of the SSO is set out in both the LSS and the Law on the Organization and Operation of the State Administration Bodies.²⁶ The SSO is the coordinator of state statistics within the national statistical system.²⁷ It has the capacity of a separate legal entity and it is an independent, professional and administrative organization.²⁸

25 State Statistical Office (2021). Women and Men in North Macedonia, 2020. Available at: https://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPoslednaPublikacija_en.aspx?id=23

26 Law on the Organization and Operation of the State Administration Bodies. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 58/00, 44/02, 13/06, 82/08, 167/10, 51/11 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.96/19 and 110/19.

27 Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18. Art. 7, para. 1 and 2.

28 Ibid. Art. 7, para. 1 and 2.

The central office of the SSO is located in Skopje, with eight additional regional offices in Skopje, Bitola, Veles, Ohrid, Kumanovo, Strumica, Shtip and Tetovo. Based on the information in the Strategic plan (2021-2023)²⁹ by December 31st, 2020, there were 242 administrative workers employed in this institution while in the list of employees for 2022 the number has d. The European Commission 2021 Country Report for North Macedonia³⁰ (2021 Country Report) highlights the need for adequate staffing of the SSO, further increase of human resources and vacancies filled, as well as sufficient financial resources. Grave concern for the lack of employees to properly carry out their responsibilities and mandate was expressed by the interviewed representatives from the SSO as well.

The SSO is comprised out of nine sectors and 42 departments.³¹ Within the organizational structure of the SSO there is a department for international cooperation and European integration, as part of the Sector for Support of the Director's activities. Presently, there are no organizational units or focal points dedicated specifically to the production, analysis and dissemination of gender statistics. For an illustrative comparison, Statistics Sweden currently has three dedicated employees that work full time and exclusively on gender statistics and, after a recent reorganization of the institution, they have been strategically placed in a unit dedicated to the Agenda 2030 – Sustainable Development Goals.³² Statistics Sweden also collaborates with other government institutions and agencies, providing continuous institutional support on gender statistics whenever necessary.

In addition to its wide array of professional activities, the SSO has the responsibility to meet international obligations in the field of statistics.³³ In close collaboration with the previously listed bodies authorized to conduct statistical surveys, the SSO is obliged to “ensure the comparability of data with other European countries, observe and apply international standards including the European Statistics Code of Practice, and actively participate in the development of official statistics at international level”.³⁴ This is a highly important responsibility of the SSO from the perspective of gender equality and gender statistics. This provision of the LSS could be read as an obligation of the SSO to produce gender statistics and create a gender statistics database as a way to ensure comparability of data with other EU countries.

29 State Statistical Office. Strategic Plan 2021-2023. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3zFvQYS>

30 European Commission (2021). Commission Staff Working Document North Macedonia 2021 Report. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/north-macedonia-report-2021_en

31 Organizational scheme of the State Statistical Office. Available at: https://www.stat.gov.mk/ZaNas_en.aspx?id=4

32 Interview with representatives from Statistics Sweden held on 23.11.2021.

33 Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18. Art. 8.

34 Ibid. Art.48-a

Statistical Council

The Statistical Council is an expert advisory body on state statistics. It is comprised of a president and 13 members, appointed and released by the national Assembly.³⁵ The Director of the SSO is an ex officio member of the Statistical Council; its other members are appointed for a term of four years. The current Statistical Council was established by a Decision of the Assembly in May 2019, with a mandate of four years. In 2020, the Statistical Council met regularly and held five meetings.³⁶

The consultative duties of the Statistical Council are mainly focused on the Programme. This body is also tasked with giving opinions and proposals on new legislation and other legal acts defining state statistics. Having in mind that the Programme sets the course for the statistical surveys to be implemented within a five-year period, the Statistical Council could use its mandate to propose amendments and ensure that the statistical surveys to be implemented contribute to the production of gender statistics.

Coordination Committee

The Coordination Committee (hereinafter Committee) is an expert, coordinating and advisory body for coordination of state statistics. The Committee is composed of a president and eight members - representatives of the authorized bodies for carrying out statistical surveys.³⁷ The president and the members of the Committee are appointed and dismissed by the Government of North Macedonia. The current Committee was established and its members were appointed by a Government Decision in May 2019; however, in 2020, this advisory body did not hold any meetings.³⁸

One of the responsibilities of the Committee is to monitor the implementation of the EU acquis in the field of statistics,³⁹ which inter alia would include the EU legislation pertaining to gender statistics. This body is also tasked with keeping track of the implementation and compliance of state statistics with the European Statistics Code of Practice.

35 Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18. Art. 10 and 11.

36 State Statistical Office (2021). Годишен извештај за работата на Државниот завод за статистика во 2020 [Annual Report on the work of the State Statistical Office in 2020]. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3BENn3L>

37 Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18. Art. 13-a and 13-b.

38 State Statistical Office (2021). Годишен извештај за работата на Државниот завод за статистика во 2020 [Annual Report on the work of the State Statistical Office in 2020]. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3BENn3L>

39 Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18. Art. 13-c.

Other national legislation relevant for gender statistics

Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men⁴⁰ (hereinafter Law on Equal Opportunities) is a *lex generalis* on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in North Macedonia. It was adopted in 2012 and it has been amended four times since. The principal aim of the Law on Equal Opportunities is to establish equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in the political, economic, social, educational, cultural, health, civil and any other area of social life. It is applicable to both the public and the private sector. The current Law on Equal Opportunities contains a provision that refers to the obligation of different entities to collect and produce data disaggregated by sex, as well as to regularly submit such data to the SSO. Namely, Article 18 of the Law on Equal Opportunities prescribes that:

“The Assembly, the Government, the state administration bodies, judicial authorities and other state bodies, the bodies of the local self-government units, legal persons who are by law entrusted with doing businesses of public interest, associations, foundations, public enterprises, educational institutions in the area of social protection, health institutions, political parties, means for public information, companies and other entities which, by law, are obliged to collect, register and process statistical data, shall be bound to present this data disaggregated by sex and to submit the data to the State Statistical Office”⁴¹.

This article deals with the obligation of by state authorities and other entities in the public and private sphere to present and submit sex-disaggregated data to the SSO. Still, there are no special obligations, duties or responsibilities prescribed to the SSO. Even though the article regulates the obligation for diverse bodies and institutions to submit data broken down by sex to the SSO, the interval in which they must do so is not defined, not even by using the term “regularly”; to put it simply, institutions could submit disaggregated data to the SSO once every 10 years and still be in compliance with the Law on Equal Opportunities. The language used in the analysed article is not very clear nor concise, thus leaving space for weak implementation and further widening of the existing gender data gaps. Lastly, Article 18 deals only with data disaggregated by sex and does not refer to gender statistics at all. Sex-disaggregated data are data collected and tabulated separately for women and men

40 Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 6/12, 30/13, 166/14 and 150/15 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.53/21.

41 Ibid. Art.18

without guarantees of reflecting gender roles and social inequalities; gender statistics, on the other hand, is a much wider concept and goes beyond disaggregation by sex.⁴²

Based on the provisions of the current Law on Equal Opportunities, the Assembly of North Macedonia adopts a strategy for gender equality for a period of eight years and monitors its implementation.⁴³ Article 19 of the Law on Equal Opportunities regulates the comprising parts of the strategy; among other segments, it is stated that “data collected and processed are interrelated, kept, analysed and presented separately in accordance with the structure by sex, within the activities of the State Statistical Office”⁴⁴. The first Strategy for Gender Equality, based on the initial Law on Equal Opportunities from 2012, was adopted for the period of 2013-2020.⁴⁵ At the time of writing this analysis, the text of the new National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 was passed by the Government, but it was not yet adopted by the Assembly, which means that the country did not have a strategy in place for over a year.

Legislative changes and obligations are crucial for any improvements in this area; in March 2021, the Minister of Labour and Social Policy has announced the finalisation of the preparation of the new Law on Gender Equality, expected to substantially change and improve the gender equality machinery at national and local level and closely related to the aforementioned strategy for gender equality.⁴⁶ The process of drafting the text of the new law covered 3 different re-drafting phases, spanning from 2019 till the period of writing this analysis, and involved several civil society organizations (CSOs), including Reactor, as a representative of the National Platform for gender Equality (alongside the CSO Zdruzenska). Some of the foreseen changes in the draft-law include defining the terms gender-disaggregated data and gender statistics, clear-cut duties for the state institutions in this regard, as well as strengthening the role and responsibilities of the SSO. Nonetheless, by the time of concluding this Analysis, the new Law on Gender Equality has neither been finalised nor been adopted.

42 European Institute for Gender Equality (2021). Quality Considerations for EIGE's Gender Statistics Database. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/quality-considerations-eiges-gender-statistics-database>

43 Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 6/12, 30/13, 166/14 and 150/15 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.53/21. Art. 9 and 19. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3qfhCjX>

44 Ibid. Art.19, para.1, sub-para.5

45 Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No.27/13.

46 *Shahpaska: Promoting gender equality is our obligation on which we continue to work dedicatedly* (2021). Slobodenpecat.mk. Available at: <https://www.slobodenpecat.mk/en/shahpaska-unapreduvaneto-na-rodovata-ednakvost-e-nasha-obvraska-na-koja-prodolzhuvame-posveteno-da-rabotime/>

Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

The Law on Prevention and Protection from Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was adopted by the Assembly on January 27th, 2021⁴⁷ (hereinafter GBV law). The GBV law entered into force eight days after it was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia and it became applicable on May 6th, 2021. The adoption of the GBV law was a step toward the harmonization of Macedonian legislation with the Istanbul Convention, which was ratified by North Macedonia in 2018.

The GBV law foresees obligations for different state institutions for collection of gender-disaggregated administrative and statistical data; there are duties for collection and protection of data throughout the text of the law, as well as a whole chapter dedicated to this subject matter (Chapter IV – Collection and protection of data).

Namely, all state administration bodies, courts, public prosecutor's office, local self-government units, legal entities that perform public administrations determined by law, as well as associations, are obliged to collect statistical and administrative data on the situation with gender-based violence (GBV) against women and domestic violence, based on sex, gender, age, community affiliation, residence and other data determined by the GBV law or other legislation, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Personal Data Protection.⁴⁸

The GBV law also foresees the daily use of a national interoperability platform – Macedonian Information Magistral (MIM) by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP) for downloading the collected data.⁴⁹ The competent bodies for data collection which are not users of MIM have an obligation to develop web services for exchange and transfer of the collected data on GBV, and also to publish the data on their official websites.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the MLSP has a responsibility to analyse and process statistically the aforementioned data in its system for social rights and services. The analyses and reports that don't include personal data protected by the Law on personal data protection should be published on a yearly basis by the MLSP.⁵¹ Other responsible institutions and organizations should also process and publish the collected data on their websites, as well as on the Central catalogue of public sector data.⁵²

47 Law on Prevention and Protection form Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.24/2021. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Uemjru>

48 Ibid. Art.11 para.1, art.24 and art.28 para.1.

49 Ibid. Art.28 para.2.

50 Ibid. Art.28 para.3.

51 Ibid. Art.28 para.4.

52 Ibid. Art 28 para.5.

The GBV law prescribes special data collection responsibilities for the national courts and the Public Prosecutor’s Office; they are to establish and keep records on GBV and domestic violence cases⁵³, including data disaggregated by sex and by gender⁵⁴.

The SSO, on the other hand, has the obligation to carry out a national survey on GBV against women and domestic violence.⁵⁵ The aim of the survey is to provide comprehensive information on the number of cases of separate forms of GBV against women and domestic violence by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, geographical affiliation of the victim and the perpetrator, as well as other information relevant for monitoring the situation of violence against women.⁵⁶

The table below provides an overview of the responsibilities on data collection, monitoring and analysis of different institutions and organizations, as prescribed by the GBV law.

Table 1. Data collection responsibilities of institutions under the 2021 GBV law

Institution	Data collection responsibility
National Coordinative Body for the Implementation of the Istanbul Convention	<p>Monitors and analyses the situation on GBV against women and domestic violence (article 16, paragraph 1, subparagraph 5).</p> <p>Gives an opinion on the methodology for integrated data collection on GBV against women and domestic violence by all relevant institutions and organizations (article 16, paragraph 1, subparagraph 11).</p> <p>Coordinates and monitors the data collection on GBV against women and domestic violence based on predetermined indicators (article 16, paragraph 1, subparagraph 12).</p>

53 Ibid. Art.29 and 30

54 The GBV law contains definitions on both sex and gender. Sex is defined as the physical characteristics of the individual (reproductive system, chromosomes, hormones) according to which sex is assigned at birth, based on a combination of bodily characteristics and internal reproductive organs. Gender, according to the GBV law, refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes which a society considers appropriate for women and men.

55 Ibid. Art.31 para.1

56 Ibid. Art.31 para.2

Institution	Data collection responsibility
Ministry of Labour and Social Policy	<p>Collects data on the number of women victims of GBV and victims of domestic violence in the system of social protection disaggregated by sex, gender, age, community affiliation, place of residence, victim-perpetrator relationship, type and number of services provided to the victims and perpetrator and other data determined by law from the institutions in the social protection system and other institutions competent for the implementation of the GBV law (article 17, paragraph 1, subparagraph 8).</p> <p>Monitors and analyses the situation with GBV against women and domestic violence and informs the National Coordinative Body at least once a year (article 17, paragraph 1, subparagraph 9).</p> <p>Download the data collected by institutions from the MIM platform; analyse and process statistically the data in the system for social rights and services; publish yearly reports and analyses (article 28).</p>
Ministry of Interior	<p>Monitors and analyses the situation with GBV against women and domestic violence and inform the National Coordinative Body at least once a year (article 18, paragraph 1, subparagraph 6).</p> <p>Collects data on the number of reported cases of GBV against women and victims of domestic violence disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, residence, victim-perpetrator relationship, qualification of the criminal offence and other data determined by law (article 18, paragraph 1, subparagraph 7).</p>
Ministry of Health	<p>Collects data on the situation on women GBV victims and victims of domestic violence that have requested assistance and intervention through the health care system disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, residence, victim-perpetrator relationship, type and number of services provided to the victims and other data in accordance with the Law on health records, as well as for the perpetrators (article 19, paragraph 1, subparagraph 8).</p> <p>Monitors and analyses the situation with GBV against women based on the data on the national electronic health records system and inform the National Coordinative Body at least once a year (article 19, paragraph 1, subparagraph 9).</p>

Institution	Data collection responsibility
Ministry of Justice	<p>Collects data on the number of free legal aid requests from women GBV victims and victims of domestic violence disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, residence, victim-perpetrator relationship, type and number of services provided to the victims and other data determined by law (article 20, paragraph 1, subparagraph 6).</p> <p>Monitors and analyses the situation with GBV against women and domestic violence and inform the National Coordinative Body at least once a year (article 20, paragraph 1, subparagraph 7).</p>
Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services	Periodically conducts research and analysis for the portrayal of GBV against women and domestic violence in the programs of the audio and audio-visual media services providers (article 22, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3).
Academy for Judges and Public Prosecutors	Conducts research and analyses on GBV against women and domestic violence (article 23, paragraph 1, subparagraph 3).
Associations	Collect data on the number of women GBV victims and victims of domestic violence they have provided assistance and support, disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, residence, victim-perpetrator relationship and other data determined by law (article 24, paragraph 1, subparagraph 4).
Trade Unions	Conduct research and analysis on the situation with GBV against women and domestic violence, report cases of GBV against women, cooperate with associations, foundations and other organizations in the awareness-raising and prevention of GBV against women and domestic violence (article 25)
Courts	Establish and keep special records on the number of cases of GBV against women and victims of domestic violence disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, residence and other grounds, as well as other data relevant for the monitoring of the situation with GBV against women and domestic violence, in accordance with the law (article 29, paragraph 1).

Institution	Data collection responsibility
Public Prosecutor's Office	Establish and keep special record on cases of GBV against women and victims of domestic violence disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, residence and other grounds, as well as data relevant for the monitoring of the situation with GBV against women and domestic violence, in accordance with the law (article 30, paragraph 1).
State Statistical Office	Conduct a national survey on the situation with GBV against women and domestic violence with an aim to provide comprehensive information on the number of cases of separate forms of GBV against women and domestic violence by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, geographical affiliation of the victim and the perpetrator, as well as other information relevant for monitoring the situation of violence against women (article 31).
All state administration bodies, courts, public prosecutor's office, local self-government units, legal entities that perform public administrations determined by law and associations	<p>Collect statistical and administrative data on the situation GBV against women and domestic violence disaggregated by sex, gender, age, community affiliation, residence and other data determined by the GBV law or other legislation, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Personal Data Protection (article 28, paragraph 1).</p> <p>Process and publish collected data on their websites, as well as on the Central catalogue of public sector data, in accordance with the Law for use of public sector data (article 28, paragraph 5).</p>

National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire (NPAA)

The National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire 2021-2025 (NPAA 2021-2025)⁵⁷ is a comprehensive strategic document for European integration of the Republic of North Macedonia. The NPAA 2021-2025 defines the priorities, strategies, dynamic and the necessary resources for the harmonisation of national legislation with the EU acquis, as well as the activities for adjusting the national institutions towards the European

57 Национална програма за усвојување на правото на Европската Унија 2021-2025 (НПАА) [National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire 2021-2025 (NPAA)]. Available at: <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/NPAA/NPAA%202021/NPAA%202021-2025.pdf>

administrative structures.⁵⁸ For the first time, the NPAA is completely restructured, both technically and substantially, and it follows the cluster structure of the new EU Enlargement Methodology⁵⁹. The new EU Enlargement Methodology puts a stronger focus on the cluster Fundamentals, which includes Chapter 18 – Statistics. The cluster Fundamentals will be opened first and closed last and progress on the fundamental reforms will determine the overall pace of negotiations with the EU.⁶⁰ Part of the short and medium-term priorities in the NPAA 2021-2025 regarding the statistical infrastructure are increasing the human resources necessary for the support of the SSO in implementing the new organizational structure and the EU acquis, as well as completely revising and harmonising the LSS with the EU statistical standards. The section of the NPAA 2021-2025 that refers to social and demographic statistics, among other, defines the following short and medium-term priorities relevant for gender statistics: calculating the labour cost index, calculating the gender pay gap, preparation of a report for quality for pensioners and delivering it to Eurostat, improving court statistics, as well as conducting the GBV survey.⁶¹

Brief overview of EU legislation, strategic and policy documents related to gender statistics

The primary legal basis for statistics on an EU-level is article 338 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)⁶² which prescribes the legislative procedure for adoption of measures for production of statistics. Article 338 of the TFEU also defines the fundamental principles for EU statistics production, such as: impartiality, reliability, objectivity, scientific independence, cost-effectiveness and statistical confidentiality. These principles are further elaborated in the European statistics Code of Practice.⁶³ On the other hand, the principle of gender mainstreaming is introduced as well in article 8 of the TFEU; it is stated that “in all its activities, the Union shall aim to eliminate inequalities, and to promote equality between women and men”. Moreover, the Treaty of Lisbon⁶⁴ adds gender

58 Ibid.

59 Enhancing the accession process – A credible EU Perspective for the Western Balkans. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enhancing-accession-process-credible-eu-perspective-western-balkans_en

60 Ibid.

61 Национална програма за усвојување на правото на Европската Унија 2021-2025 (НПАА) [National Programme for Adoption of the Acquis Communautaire 2021-2025 (NPAA)]. Available at: <https://www.sep.gov.mk/data/file/NPAA/NPAA%202021/NPAA%202021-2025.pdf>

62 Consolidated Version of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3pF6qbp>

63 European statistics Code of Practice. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Y5eDtx>

64 Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty Establishing the European Community. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12007L%2FTXT>

equality to the values of the EU and it mandates that the EU shall combat social exclusion and discrimination and promote equality between women and men.

Regulation No 223/2009 of 11 March 2009 on European statistics (hereinafter Regulation on ES)⁶⁵ establishes the basic legal framework for European statistics. It is binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member states. The Regulation on ES refers to the Commission (Eurostat) as the statistical authority responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics. Eurostat, as the statistical office of the EU, was established by Commission Decision 2012/504/EU of 17 September 2012 on Eurostat⁶⁶. In this Decision it is stated that “European statistics produced on the basis of personal data should be gender-disaggregated when relevant”.

The European statistics Code of Practice (CoP) sets out a common quality framework for European statistics.⁶⁷ The CoP contains 16 principles on the institutional environment, statistical processes and statistical outputs. Its aim is to ensure that statistics produced within the European Statistical System (ESS)⁶⁸ are relevant, timely and accurate and that they comply with the principles of professional independence, impartiality and objectivity.⁶⁹ As mentioned in the previous section, the SSO of North Macedonia is in most respects compliant with the CoP⁷⁰ and the national legal framework for statistical infrastructure is broadly in line with it as well.⁷¹ Nevertheless, the compliance of the SSO was found to be weaker in the areas of coordination of the statistical system and in the range and quality of statistical outputs, particularly their relevance and utility for a wide range of users.⁷² Having in mind the strategic priorities of the SSO, as defined in the Strategic Plan 2021-2023, national statistics would need to be further aligned with the relevant EU acquis.

65 Regulation No 223/2009 on European Statistics. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3yjdj81W>

66 Commission Decision 2012/504/EU on Eurostat. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32012D0504>

67 European statistics Code of Practice. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Y5eDtx>

68 European Statistical System (ESS) refers to Eurostat and the National Statistical Institutes and other national authorities in the EU Member States. It also includes the statistical authorities of the European Economic Area (EEA) countries and Switzerland. Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/main/about/who-we-are>

69 European statistics Code of Practice. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2Y5eDtx>

70 Alldritt, R., de Pourbaix, I. & Carlquist, T. (2017). Peer Review on the Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the coordination role of the State Statistical Office, p.22. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3jD4hJH>

71 European Commission (2021). Commission Staff Working Document North Macedonia 2021 Report. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/north-macedonia-report-2021_en

72 Alldritt, R., de Pourbaix, I. & Carlquist, T. (2017). Peer Review on the Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the coordination role of the State Statistical Office, p.22. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3jD4hJH>

The European Union has also adopted a Regulation establishing the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)⁷³, tasked with collection, analysis and dissemination of information and data on gender equality, development of appropriate tools for the elimination of all forms of gender-based discrimination, gender-mainstreaming in all policy areas, promotion of dialogue among stakeholders and raising awareness on gender equality amongst EU citizens. Another assignment of EIGE is to develop methods to improve objectivity, comparability and reliability of data at European level by establishing criteria that will increase the consistency of information and take into account gender issues when collecting data.⁷⁴ EIGE has supported the work of the SSO and the development of the Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia, which was built under the Instrument of Pre-Accession (IPA) and funded by the EU. The Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia, first published in 2019, has not been updated yet.

Additionally, the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025⁷⁵ puts an accent on the necessity for comprehensive, updated and comparable data for the effectiveness of policies combating gender-based violence. It is also noted that data should be disaggregated by relevant intersectional aspects and indicators, such as age, disability, migrant status and rural-urban residence. The Gender Equality Strategy envisages an EU-wide gender-based violence survey, coordinated by Eurostat, with results presented in 2023. With this Strategy, the Commission, amongst other activities and actions, calls on Member States to ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention, as well as to systematically collect and report data on gender-based violence. It is also stated that the European Commission will disseminate data and analysis of trends on the representation of women and men in decision-making positions, in cooperation with EIGE. Although not a legally binding document, but a soft law instrument expressing political commitments, the Gender Equality Strategy is important as its progress will be reported on an annual basis and the reports will include relevant data and indicators, building on EIGE's annual Gender Equality Index.

73 Regulation No 1922/2006 on establishing a European Institute for Gender Equality. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32006R1922>

74 Ibid. Art.3

75 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0152>

The EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III⁷⁶ draws from the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and it is complementary to the EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025.⁷⁷ Even though GAP III is also not legally binding, it is extremely important for North Macedonia as one of the IPA beneficiaries. Namely, GAP III should guide the design of all external EU-funded programmes in which three minimum standards should be applied: (1) conducting and using gender analyses to inform decision-making on future action and integrating these into all relevant dialogues, policies, strategies, programmes and operations, (2) applying gender sensitive and sex-disaggregated indicators and statistics to monitoring and evaluation and (3) giving robust reasons, based on the findings of the gender analyses, to substantiate any action deemed not to contribute to gender equality. In the Staff Working Document Objectives and Indicators to frame the implementation of the GAP III (2021-25)⁷⁸ it is stated that most of the indicators should be at least disaggregated by sex. However, it is also indicated that, whenever relevant and feasible, sex-disaggregation should be replaced by gender-disaggregation and data should also be broken down by other relevant intersectional aspects.

International conventions and soft law instruments

Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)

The Istanbul Convention⁷⁹ was adopted by the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers on April 7th, 2011. It was opened for signature on May 11th, 2011, and entered into force on August 1st, 2014, following its 10th ratification by Andorra. Even though North Macedonia signed the Convention back in 2011, it was ratified by the Assembly in March 2018, following a change in government in 2017 and continuous strong lobbying and year-long public pressure from the civil society. The new 2021 GBV law in North Macedonia, previously discussed in

76 Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in EU External Action. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/join-2020-17-final_en.pdf

77 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Union of Equality: LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2020-2025. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0698>

78 Joint Staff Working Document Objectives and Indicators to frame the implementation of the Gender Action Plan III (2021-25) Accompanying the document Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council Gender Action Plan III: An Ambitious Vision on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment for EU External Action. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020SC0284>

79 Council of Europe. Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3x4aWAV>

this analysis, was adopted as part of the efforts to harmonize national legislation with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention.

Article 11, which refers to data collection and research for the purpose of implementation of the Istanbul Convention, foresees the following obligations for State Parties:

- to collect disaggregated relevant statistical data at regular intervals on cases of all forms of violence covered by the scope of the Convention;
- to support research in the field of all forms of violence covered by the Convention, in order to study its root causes and effects, incidences and conviction rates, as well as the efficacy of measures taken to implement the Convention.⁸⁰

State Parties also have a responsibility to endeavour to conduct population-based surveys at regular intervals to assess the prevalence of and trends in all covered forms of violence, as well as to ensure the collected information is made available to the public.⁸¹ In order to ensure international cooperation and enable international benchmarking, State Parties have an obligation to provide the Group of experts on action against violence against women and domestic violence (GREVIO) with the information collected pursuant article 11 of the Convention.⁸² A recent draft - Shadow report on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention concluded that, overall, North Macedonia still lacks systematic collection of disaggregated relevant statistical data at regular intervals on cases of all forms of violence covered by the scope of the Convention.⁸³

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace⁸⁴ was adopted on the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The Beijing Platform for Action reflects the political commitment of 189 governments for women's empowerment in all areas of life. It is considered the key global policy document on gender equality which sets

80 Ibid. Art.11, para.1

81 Ibid. Art.11, paras.2 and 4

82 Ibid. Art.11, para.3.

83 Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and Gender Equality Platform (2021). Draft Shadow Report on the Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence in North Macedonia, p.22. Available at: <https://mhc.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/draft-shadow-report-grevio.pdf>

84 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace (1995). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3xYo4J5>

strategic objectives and actions in 12 identified critical areas of concern.⁸⁵ Both the Republic of North Macedonia and the EU are among the signatories to the Beijing Platform for Action. On an EU level, EIGE has been tasked with monitoring its implementation since 2010 and its latest report shows that no Member State has fully completed the objectives outlined in 1995 and that many of the challenges identified more than 25 years ago, remain relevant today.⁸⁶

One of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action is to generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.⁸⁷ Under this strategic objective, one of the defined actions to be taken by national statistical services is, inter alia, to ensure that statistics related to individuals are collected, compiled, analysed and presented by sex and age and reflect problems, issues and questions related to women and men in society.⁸⁸ Political commitments were also expressed for national statistical authorities to designate or appoint staff to strengthen gender-statistics programmes and ensure coordination and monitoring⁸⁹, which, as elaborated previously, has not been completed in North Macedonia. Some of the most important actions to be taken by governments under this strategic objective are:

- to ensure the regular production of a statistical publication on gender that presents and interprets topical data on women and men in a form suitable for a wide range of non-technical users (Section 207 a);
- to ensure that producers and users of statistics in each country regularly review the adequacy of the official statistical system and its coverage of gender issues, and prepare a plan for needed improvements, where necessary (Section 207 b);
- to use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects (Section 207 d).

85 (1) Women and poverty; (2) Education and Training of Women; (3) Women and Health; (4) Violence Against Women; (5) Women and Armed Conflict; (6) Women and the economy; (7) Women in Power and Decision-making; (8) Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women; (9) Human Rights of Women; (10) Women and the Media; (11) Women and the Environment; (12) The Girl Child.

86 EIGE (2020). Beijing + 25: the fifth review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the EU Member States. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/beijing-25-fifth-review-implementation-beijing-platform-action-eu-member-states?lang=cs>

87 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for Equality, Development and Peace (1995). Strategic objective H.3. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3xYo4J5>

88 Ibid. Section 206 (a).

89 Ibid. Section 206 (d).

Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

In 2015, the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁹⁰ through which governments collectively pledged to eradicate poverty and find sustainable and inclusive development solutions. With 2030 Agenda, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets were set; they aim to end poverty and hunger, combat inequalities, build peaceful, just and inclusive societies, protect human rights and promote gender equality and ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources.⁹¹ The SDGs are integrated and indivisible and they balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental.⁹² With 2030 Agenda, countries committed themselves to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality at all levels; the need for systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda was highlighted as well.⁹³

SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by ending all forms of discrimination, violence and any harmful practices against women and girls, both in the public and private sphere of life. It also notes the importance of recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work and calls for full and effective participation of women and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making, as well as for universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

The EU has committed itself to delivering on the 2030 Agenda and its implementation. Eurostat, EU's statistical authority, monitors and provides quantitative assessment of the progress of the EU towards reaching the SDGs. The 2021 edition of Eurostat's monitoring report is based on a set of 102 indicators, selected by taking into account their policy relevance from an EU perspective, as well as their availability, country coverage, data freshness and quality.⁹⁴

In the latest Report of the Government of North Macedonia on the application of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it is stated that a national set of indicators for monitoring

90 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Eurostat (2021). Sustainable development in the European Union Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3lhHTQq>

the progress on SDGs has not been defined yet.⁹⁵ It is also noted that there are activities and efforts towards building the set of indicators according to the structure of the EU SDG data set, having in mind the commitment for harmonization with the European statistics and requirements.⁹⁶ Furthermore, it is stated that data collection on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDG has begun. However, the Government has identified five SDGs as a priority, SDG 5 not being one of them.⁹⁷

Gender Mainstreaming the Statistical System

Gender mainstreaming of the statistical system is the process of integrating the gender perspective in the production and dissemination of the official statistics. The methods and procedures for the collection, processing, storage and presentation of statistical data should guarantee accurate reflection of the reality of gender inequalities. Statistical surveys and administrative records as possible sources of official statistics should be comprehensive in grasping all areas of inequalities; furthermore, concepts and classifications should mirror the nuisance of intersectional inequalities and be conscientious of biases that might conserve or further inequalities.

All official data referring to individuals should be gender disaggregated. However, disaggregation of data by gender is only one aspect of what constitutes gender statistics.⁹⁸ Gender statistics should enable users to “see” gender inequalities in the societies over time. This means that gender statistics should be comprehensive in grasping all areas of inequalities (such as paid and unpaid labour, education, power and decision making); attuned in reflecting diversity and intersectionality (rural people, Roma, persons with disabilities);

95 Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (2019). Report of the Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on the application of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the results of the 2nd special session of the UN General Assembly (2000) – Beijing +25, p.69. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3pvLfGZ>

96 Ibid.

97 Five SDGs were identified as a priority by the Government: SDG 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere, SDG 4 - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, SDG 8 - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, SDG 13 - Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts and SDG 16 - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

98 United Nations (2016). Integrating a gender perspective into statistics. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/wiki/display/genderstatmanual/Integrating+a+Gender+Perspective+into+Statistics?preview=/79009569/85787258/Integrating-a-Gender-Perspective-into-Statistics-E.pdf>

watchful of societal and cultural factors that produce gender inequalities (e.g. using NOT using only feminine i.e. housewives for describing economically inactive persons⁹⁹).

Because inequalities are relational and should be inferred by comparison, gender statistics are not women's statistics or "women only"¹⁰⁰ statistics. Furthermore, gender statistics should reflect the negative effects of hegemonic masculinities on men's lives (such as higher rates of suicides, smoking, accidents, or marginal levels of parental leave take up rate among men).

Gender statistics should be part of all domains and areas of the official statistics and the production and dissemination of gender statistics should be institutionalized in all relevant units of the official statistical system. Gender statistics should not be a peripheral "add-on," but rather an integrated "part of" the official statistics.

Gender statistics should be mainstreamed through the statistical system, however the efforts to gender-mainstream the statistical system should be formalized as a separate responsibility within the system at least through the establishment of a coordinative mechanisms. Arguing for the establishment of a gender statistics unit in national statistical offices, representatives from Statistics Sweden in "Engendering Statistics - A Tool for Change" describe the role of the gender statistics unit as "catalytic" and coordinative:

"A gender statistics unit has the task of improving user – producer collaboration and promoting the production and improvement of all statistics related to gender issues" p.47

Thus, gender statistics unit have the responsibility to coordinate and catalyse both the internal dialogue between different sectors of statistics and the external dialogue between the statistical system as a producer of statistics and the stakeholders (such as policymakers or other decision-makers, civil society organizations, international organizations, academia, the private sector, citizens etc.) as users of statistics. However, beyond the coordinative role of an established unit or mechanism, all stakeholders, users, and producers have the responsibility to maintain the dialogue because it is crucial to gender mainstream the official statistical system and to identify needs and gaps for gender statistics

A systematic and institutionalised dialogue is essential to identify and meet the diverse users need for gender statistics, within the constraints of what is available and what could be produced as official statistics. The mapping of needs within this 'user-producer'

99 See labour market statistics, population aged 15 years and over in the Republic of Macedonia, 2013 in Women and Men 2014 edition <https://www.stat.gov.mk/Publikacii/Gender2014.pdf>

100 United Nations (2016). Integrating a gender perspective into statistics. Available at: <https://unstats.un.org/wiki/display/genderstatmanual/Integrating+a+Gender+Perspective+into+Statistics?preview=/79009569/85787258/Integrating-a-Gender-Perspective-into-Statistics-E.pdf>

dialogue should be both thematical and technical¹⁰¹ since we need to consider what is missing as an information but also what could be produced within the constraints of the available infrastructure, as well as assess the potential and capacities for further technical improvements. For example, we know that gender disaggregated data for the average number of hours spent on paid and unpaid work combined (total work burden)¹⁰², could be easily produced as an indicator from the Time Use Survey data, since SSO is conducting this survey as part of their Programme activities. However, producing this indicator to be disaggregated on the level of municipalities is not technically feasible since the statistical extrapolations needed to be done could produce significant statistical error, making the data unusable. Sampling method does not allow for extrapolation at the level of municipalities (census data can allow for such an extrapolation

The users-producers dialogue is crucial not only to identify needs and gaps but also to inform users what is available, how can be found and how should be interpreted. The dissemination practises should be streamlined withing this dialogue and the official statistical system should use this dialogue to further raise statistical literacy among users and inform them how to interpret data and metadata. A fluent dialogue could help to integrate insight on what is available as official statistics and how the dissemination practices should be tailored to better fit the needs of different users. For example, policymakers might not need a technical report of a survey but an analytical brief with implications from the data. On the other hand, independent researchers as users of data should be interested in the survey methodology to be able to evaluate what could be inferred as a conclusion or implication from the data. Finally, the dialogue between the statistical system and policy makers as data users should be a dynamic system in which the outputs become inputs that incrementally produce change. Gender inequalities should be recognized as areas in need of improvement and targeted with specific goals. As a result, the current gender equality policy objectives should anticipate the needs for gender statistics and simultaneously gender statistics should inform policy goals.

101 UN Women (21 Sep 2020) Curriculum on Gender Statistics Training. Available at: <https://data.unwomen.org/resources/gender-statistics-training-curriculum>

102 This is for example relevant for the Sustainable Goals target 5.4 recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

In dialogue with the State Statistical Office of North Macedonia: Engendering the Statistical System

As part of this analysis, we conducted two group interviews with representatives from the State Statistical Office. The first group interview was held online on 27.07.2021 with representatives from the sector for social statistics, sector for support of the Director's activities and the sector for dissemination. All of them were at some point of their career involved in the preparation of the publication "Women and men in North Macedonia".

The second group interview was held face-to-face on 10.08.2021 with the Director General, representative from the sector of labour market and living standard, and representative from the sector of social statistics, who was also involved in the preparation of the national Gender Equality Index.

Below we discuss the questions and general conclusions and that came up during both group interviews.

Why there is not a special unit for gender statistics?

The discussion whether a national statistical system should have a distinct unit or focal point(s) that will catalyse the production and the dissemination of the gender statistics is still prevalent in the influential guides for engendering the national statistical systems.¹⁰³ There is not a single formula, and experts agree that beyond the "institutionalization" or establishment of a distinct entity for gender statistic, it is important to ensure that all practices that involve production and dissemination of statistics are gender mainstreamed. This means that the data should be collected, analysed, presented, and disseminated in a way that clearly shows the factual inequalities between men and women and, if it takes place, the eventual progress in narrowing the gender gaps. In line with this, the national statistical system is responsible to meet the needs of the policy makers and suggest ways on how to measure the factual inequalities, as well as inform policies with an aim of furthering gender equality.

Based on our discussions with the SSO officials, we further confirmed the absence of a dedicated gender equality sector, department, or even a systematized full-time position that foresees a focal point responsible for coordinating gender statistics across sectors. Project-based or needs based, this type of dedicated staff should form and coordinate working groups with representatives from relevant sectors and be responsible for compiling available gender statistics. When it comes to specific examples that incorporate gender statistics

103 United Nations (2016). Making data count for all. Good practices in integrating gender in national statistical system. https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/Making_Data_Count_Integrating_gender_in_national_statistical_systems.pdf

data bases, such as the publication “Women and Men in North Macedonia”, in the absence of dedicated staff or a separate unit, the Sector for Social Statistics is in a way responsible for these tasks, because most of the relevant data is derived from surveys related to social statistics.

Lack of resources

According to the SSO representatives, the discussion for a dedicated unit for gender statistics becomes more relevant as gender equality concerns become evident on the national policy agenda, as well as following the international debate on the relevance of gender statistics. Two lines of argument were provided as to why SSO does not have a separate unit for gender statistics.

The first one implies a scarcity of human resources. Namely, the SSO is limited in its capacity to open new job positions due to financial and administrative restraints, i.e. lack of sufficient funding and administrative burden associated with changing the systematization of the organizational structure; meanwhile, because there is a shortage of expert statisticians, at overall national level, the SSO must also foresee long-term investments in training to “self-produce” the experts required to perform the job.

Lack of institutional will

The second line of reasoning is driven by the belief that creating a separate unit for gender statistics is unnecessary because the SSO regularly produces gender data through their work. Gender, i.e. sex, as a variable, according to the SSO representatives, is present in all surveys where persons are the primary units of observation, i.e. the SSO officials claim that sex is specified as a variable in the short description of all relevant surveys detailed in the Five-Year Statistical Programme (2018-2022) and they consider this sufficient.¹⁰⁴ To provide the wider picture, we have analysed the programme and according to our analysis, and as previously indicated, data disaggregated by sex is referenced in the brief description of 48 out of 319 planned statistical surveys, or in 15% of the planned surveys.

This reasoning that a separate gender statistics unit is unnecessary might be influenced by the notion that gender mainstreaming should be ‘automatically’ ensured in all processes associated to the production and dissemination of statistics, but it could also indicate that the topic of gender statistics is not yet considered a priority on the national agenda.

104 Five-Year Statistical Programme, 2018-2022. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Republic of Macedonia No.22/18, 224/8 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.18/20.

Do we produce gender statistic to assess gender equality policies?

Production of gender statistics is an important means for assessing gender equality policies and it involves a wider gender machinery at national level and corresponding legislation. When discussing SSO's relationship with the national gender machinery, representatives referenced the relevant legislative and strategic documents that regulate SSO's responsibility related to gender statistics (e.g. Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Art. 8, 11, 18, 19, Gender Equality Strategy, 2013-2020, National Action Plan for Gender Equality, 2018-2020, Law on Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, Art. 31, 33, 34, Action plan for the implementation of the Convention on the Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Family Violence 2018-2023). This indicates that relevant representatives of SSO are formally aware of the legal and strategic framework for gender equality that needs to be informed by gender statistics.

However, it should be emphasized that, at the time the interview was conducted, representatives were not fully aware about the recent developments linked to the new draft Law on Gender Equality, and how the SSO's position as the lead authority for gender statistics will be specified in it.

SSO supplies gender statistics but does not evaluate gender (in)equalities

Furthermore, representatives confirmed that they are frequently consulted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, and that they are regularly part of the working groups related to public policy processes. However, they also implied that their role is more of a supplier – a body that supplies the requested statistics, rather than an authority that has the power to suggest evidence-based policy input and drive changes in that respect. This prompted an important debate on the role of SSO in the gender equality policy mechanisms. According to the representatives, the SSO's mission is to simply generate gender statistics, while lacking the authority or capacity to analyse or assess gender inequalities in terms of policy objectives. Furthermore, it was emphasized that they are primarily responsible for responding to users' requests in terms of supplying relevant gender statistics, if they are available through the surveys foreseen in the five-year Programme of Statistical Surveys.

Can SSO anticipate gaps in gender statistics?

According to Article 8 of the Law on State Statistics¹⁰⁵, “within its authorities, the [State Statistical] Office” should, among other professional responsibilities, “determine the needs for statistical data.” This means that SSO has the authority to determine the needs for gender statistics, implying that SSO could very well play a more active role in gender equality policy

¹⁰⁵ Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18.

processes. SSO is not only a provider of gender statistics, but it also has the authority to anticipate the need for gender equality data. This implies that SSO should identify gaps in gender statistics availability and suggest how different aspects of gender inequalities can and should be measured. Furthermore, because needs should be reflected in policy objectives, SSO could also play a more active role in policy objective formulation. When questioned on the areas that lack gender statistics, a SSO representative stated that, in their opinion, as a national system, we lack gender statistics on ownership, informal economy, and gender-based violence.

Is the Programme of Statistical Surveys gender mainstreamed?

If we examine the role of the SSO as a body that “only” responds to the needs of users, we can argue that SSO can act upon these data needs only if they are anticipated in the current Programme of Statistical Surveys. If we look at the process from that point of view, we inevitably come to the question whether the consultative processes for developing the Programme of Statistical Surveys are gender mainstreamed. In the text of the current Programme (2018-2022), SSO notes that several working meetings were held with state authorities and authorized bodies, holders of administrative data sources, as well as with users of statistical data (civil society sector and the media are also mentioned). These working meetings are further described as “workshops” and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is named among the consulted bodies but whether the gender equality goals were considered it remains unanswered.

Available Gender Indicators and Statistics

In terms of gender statistics, the most notable products of SSO are the publication *Women and Men in North Macedonia*¹⁰⁶, an annual publication compiling different gender statistics, and the Gender Indicators folder on the MakStat data base¹⁰⁷.

Women and Men in North Macedonia

The publication *Women and men in North Macedonia* is a compilation of gender statistics produced by SSO for over 20 years. So far there have been twelve editions, wherein the publication was first initiated as a biannual booklet and since 2012 it has been published on annual basis. The last available publication presents gender disaggregated data divided in three thematic sections: Population and Health, Education and Communication, Labour

106 State Statistical Office of North Macedonia (2008-2021). *Women and Men in the North Macedonia*. Available: https://www.stat.gov.mk/PublikaciiPoOblast_en.aspx?id=23&rbrObl=37

107 State Statistical Office of North Macedonia (Last accessed 10.03.2022). *MAKStat Database*. Available: <http://makstat.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb/pXweb/mk/MakStat/>

Market and Social Welfare. Until 2017 the edition also presented a thematic section Justice, and the 2008 and 2010 editions also contained sections on the Elections, but neither was included in the last publication

Table 2 contains a list of the gender statistics (by the reference title of the table or the chart) included in the current edition of Women and Men in North Macedonia, 2020. All the presented statistics are compiled from ten listed sources, including the Census of the Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of North Macedonia (2001) and the following estimations based on the census data. We could argue that more statistical surveys could be utilized as a source of gender-disaggregated data since, as previously mentioned, sex is specified as a variable in the short description in only 48 statistical surveys of the Five-Year Statistical Programme (2018-2022)¹⁰⁸. The listed sources include the Institute for Public Health (for abortion rates) but none of the other authorized bodies for state statistics are clearly mentioned.

108 Five-Year Statistical Programme, 2018-2022. Official Gazette of the Republic of the Republic of Macedonia No.22/18, 224/8 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.18/20.

Table 2. Gender statistics in Women and Men in North Macedonia, 2020

Population	1. Population Censuses 1921-2002 (Population, gender structure, Increase index, Number of women per 1000 men)	
	2. Number of women and men - Population Censuses	
	3. Individual households by number of members, percentage distribution, 2002	
	4. Family units by type, percentage distribution, Census 2002	
	5. Changes in population	
	6. Population by five-year age groups	
	7. Percentage distribution of the population by basic age groups	
	8. Population by basic age groups	
	<i>Listed sources:</i>	9. Average age of the population
		10. Live births by age and marital status of the mother
		11. Average age of mother at birth
		12. Average age of death
		13. Mortality rate
		14. Deaths by five-year age groups
		15. Marriages by age of bride and groom
		16. Average age at first marriage
		17. Marriages by former marital status of bride and groom
		18. Marriages by marriage order of bride and groom
		19. Divorces by age of wife and husband
		20. Divorces by child custody after divorce, percentage distribution (%)
		21. Basic indicators for marriages and divorces
		22. Divorces per 1000 marriages
		23. Average age of groom and bride at first marriage
		24. Emigrants to abroad by age and sex
		25. Immigrants from abroad by age and sex
		26. Immigrated foreigners by reason for immigration, percentage distribution (%)
		27. Life expectancy
		28. Life expectancy at age 65
		29. Total fertility rate
		30. Age-specific fertility rates
		31. Infant mortality rate
		32. Deaths by causes of death
		33. Deaths in transport accidents
		34. Live births
		35. Stillbirths
		36. Abortion rate in the Republic of North Macedonia

<p>Education and Communication</p> <p><i>Listed sources:</i></p> <p>1. Statistical surveys on primary education</p> <p>2. Statistical surveys on secondary education</p> <p>3. Statistical surveys on tertiary education</p> <p>4. Labour Force Survey</p>	37. Students in the educational process, number and net enrolment rates
	38. Student flow from primary and lower secondary to upper secondary education, number and sex distribution
	39. Student flow from upper secondary to tertiary education, number and sex distribution
	40. Students who continued their education, percentages
	41. Early school-leavers
	42. Students who terminated their education, number and drop-out rates
	43. Teaching personnel in primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education, number and sex distribution
	44. Students who completed regular upper secondary education according to qualification, school year
	45. Teachers and supporting staff in tertiary education, number, and sex distribution
	46. Students enrolled in and graduated from undergraduate studies, number, and sex distribution
	47. Students who have graduated from undergraduate studies, by scientific field, number, and sex distribution
	48. Students who have enrolled in postgraduate studies, by scientific field of the master’s thesis, number and sex distribution
	49. Students who have enrolled in postgraduate studies, by scientific field of the specialist’s thesis, number and sex distribution
	50. Students who have enrolled in postgraduate studies, by scientific field of the doctoral studies, number and sex distribution
	51. Masters of science by scientific field of the master’s thesis, number, sex distribution and year of completion of master studies
	52. Specialists by scientific field of the specialist’s thesis, number, sex distribution and year of completion of specialisation
	53. Doctors of Science according to the type of scientific branch of the doctoral dissertation and gender, number and structure and year of completion of doctoral studies
	54. Internet users by age groups
	55. Internet users by education

<p>Labour Market</p> <p><i>Listed sources:</i></p> <p>1. Labour Force Survey</p>	56. Population aged 15 years and over in the Republic of North Macedonia
	57. Population aged 15 years and over by economic activity, gender and age
	58. Activity rates of the population aged 15 years and over, by gender and age
	59. Activity rates of the population aged 15 years and over, by gender and age - urban and rural
	60. Employment rates of the population aged 15 years and over, by gender and age - urban and rural
	61. Full-time and part-time employed, by gender and age
	62. Proportion of part-time employed in total employment, by gender and age
	63. Full-time and part-time employed, by gender and educational attainment
	64. Employed persons by gender and economic status
	65. Employed persons by status of employment and gender, urban and rural
	66. Employers by sex and size of enterprises
	67. Employed persons by sectors of activity and gender
	68. Employed by net wages and gender
	69. Employed persons by occupation and gender
	70. Formal and informal employment by gender
	71. Employed persons by educational attainment and gender
	72. Unemployed persons by educational attainment and gender
	73. Working age population attending formal (regular) education and other learning activities outside regular education
	74. Persons aged 15 to 19 years not employed and not included in the process of education or training
	75. Formal and informal employment by educational attainment
	76. Unemployed persons by duration of unemployment and gender
	77. Unemployment rate of population aged 15 years and over by gender and age - urban and rural
	78. Employment rate of persons aged 15-64
	79. Unemployment rate of persons aged 15-74
	80. Employment rate of older workers aged 55-64
	81. Long-term unemployment rate

Social Welfare	82. Recipients of social cash benefits, households
	83. Recipients in adult care institutions
	84. Recipients in institutions for care for persons with disabilities
	85. Employees in trade companies for employment of disabled persons
	86. Children in institutions for care and education - kindergartens/centres for early childhood
<i>Listed sources:</i>	
1. Social welfare statistics	87. Pupils and students lodging in homes and boarding schools

The introduction of the publication starts with a definition on gender equality as defined in the Law on Gender Equality (Article 4(1))¹⁰⁹. It is interesting to note that a description of the National Action Plan for Equal Opportunities for Men and Women is also provided but the Strategy for Equal Opportunities (2013-2020)¹¹⁰ is not explicitly mentioned. The principle of equal opportunity is then defined in terms of normative measures that ensure equal treatment and non-discrimination. Finally, gender statistics is referred to as sex disaggregated data and statistics that illustrate gender issues in the society. It is explicitly stated that all data on individuals should be collected, analysed, and presented by sex and the Article 22 of the Law on Equal Opportunities¹¹¹ is also referenced. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is mentioned as an international document that emphasizes the obligation for gender statistics. The editions from 2008 and 2010 also contain explanations on the qualitative and quantitative aspect when defining gender equality and describe as unequal distributions those in which the share of women or men is less than 40%. This is in accordance with the Law on Equal Opportunities (Article 6).

Gender Indicators - MakStat Data Base

Users can access the tables with time series of data from various areas using the MakStat database, which is based on the PC-Axis retrieving programme. The MakStat data base contains 28 main folders further divided in thematic subfolders. One of the main folders is designated as Gender Indicators¹¹² (previously named as Sex Indicators) and it contains 70 datasets in total. In the remaining main folders (excluding old census data), 195 datasets contain a variable designated as “sex” and 150 datasets contain a variable designated as “gender”. Regardless of the naming both variables contain the categories ‘men’ and ‘women’

109 Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 6/12, 30/13, 166/14 and 150/15 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.53/21.

110 Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No.27/13.

111 Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 6/12, 30/13, 166/14 and 150/15 and Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No.53/21.

112 The folder was previously named Sex Indicators and we believe that the re-naming coincided with our advocacy efforts to raise awareness about gender statistics.

or some variation of these (e.g, male and female students). The available datasets vary regarding the date of latest update. In the following overview we focus on the Gender Indicators folder as a designated resource of gender statistics on the MakStat database.

Table 3 lists indicators available in the folder named Gender Indicators in the MakStat data base. In total, 70 indicators are available that could be classified in seven thematic areas, namely population, education, IT communication, labour market, social welfare, judiciary, and decision making. The structure of the thematic areas resembles that of the publication *Women and Men in NM*, but with the addition of the data on judiciary and decision making, thematic areas that were in fact present in the earlier versions of the booklet but not in the latest editions as such. The database enables users a focused overview of the available gender statistics.¹¹³

Table 3. Gender statistics available in the folder Gender Indicators- MakStat data base

1	Population
2	Live births
3	Deaths
4	Immigrants
5	Emigrated
6	Population aged 0 - 14
7	Population aged 15-64
8	Population aged 65 and over
9	Population - unknown age
10	Average age of the population
11	Average age of the dead
12	Mortality rate
13	Average age at first marriage
14	Internal immigration rate of the population aged 0 - 14
15	Internal immigration rate of the population aged 15-29
16	Internal immigration rate of the population aged 30-64
17	Internal immigration rate of the population aged 65 and over
18	Life expectancy at birth
19	Infant mortality rate

113 It is noteworthy that the Gender Indicators folder was updated on 25.05.2022, which coincides with our advocacy efforts to promote availability of gender statistics (prior to this the available indicators covered between 2000 and 2016).

20	Mortality rates (per 10,000 population) from diseases of the circulatory system
21	Mortality rates (per 10,000 population) from neoplasms
22	Mortality rates (per 10,000 population) from endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases
23	Mortality rates (per 10,000 population) from diseases of the respiratory system
24	Mortality rates (per 10,000 population) from violent deaths
25	Population aged 15 and over without education and with incomplete primary education (structure)
26	Population aged 15 and over with completed primary education (structure)
27	Population aged 15 and over still in the process of primary education (structure)
28	Population aged 15 and over with completed secondary education (structure)
29	Population aged 15 and over with higher and higher education (structure)
30	Literate population aged 10 and over (structure)
31	Illiterate population aged 10 and over (structure)
32	Enrolled students in primary education
33	Enrolled students in secondary education
34	Number of students enrolled in the first year of secondary education
35	Primary education teachers
36	Teachers in secondary education
37	Number of students who enrolled for the first time in the first year of higher education, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
38	Higher education teachers
39	Total enrolled students, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
40	Graduates, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
41	Persons enrolled in postgraduate studies - masters, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
42	Persons enrolled in postgraduate studies-specialists, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
43	Persons who applied for a doctoral dissertation, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
44	Masters of Science, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
45	Specialists in science, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
46	Doctor of Science, citizens of the Republic of Macedonia
47	Computer users (15 - 54), in (%)

48	Internet users (15 - 54), in (%)
49	Employees (population aged 15 and over)
50	Unemployed (population aged 15 and over)
51	Inactive population (population aged 15 and over)
52	Activity rate (population aged 15 and over)
53	Employment rate (population aged 15 and over)
54	Unemployment rate (population aged 15 and over)
55	Full time employees
56	Part-time employees
57	Employees in the sector Agriculture, hunting and forestry
58	Unemployed without education
59	Employees in the Hotels and Restaurants sector
60	Employees in the Trade sector
61	Children in public institutions for care and education of children - kindergartens
62	Pupils accommodated in dormitories
63	Beneficiaries of social financial assistance (number of households)
64	Disabled employees in vocational rehabilitation organizations
65	Reported-known perpetrators of crimes
66	Defendants
67	Condemned
68	Elected mayors of municipalities
69	Elected councilors of municipalities
70	Elected Members of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

Gender Statistics from the newly published Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of North Macedonia, 2021

In 2021, SSO conducted the long-awaited Census of Population, Households and Dwellings in the Republic of North Macedonia, after nearly two decades from the last one in 2002. At the time of writing this analysis, SSO has published in total 34 datasets from the 2021 census, containing gender-disaggregated data. The datasets are published on the on the MakStat base. A separate folder is containing 8 datasets from the first published data on 30.03.2022. The rest of the datasets are in the Population folder, further divided in 6 subfolders: Age and sex, Ethno-cultural characteristics, Citizenship, Educational characteristics, Economic

characteristics and Disability. In 30 of the 34 datasets the available variable is designated as “sex” and in 4 datasets (in the subfolder Economic characteristics) the available variable is designated as “gender”. No explanation is available about this inconsistency. Of the available data sets, only 2 datasets contain data disaggregated on the level of regions, whereas the rest of the datasets are for municipalities as territorial levels. In all subfolders except the Economic characteristics subfolder, the available datasets refer to the total resident population.

In Age and sex subfolder available are gender-disaggregated data by age (single age and five-years age groups) and by regions, municipalities and type of settlements (urban or rural). Beyond this subfolder 30 of the available datasets contain age or age-group related variable. In Ethno-cultural characteristics subfolder, the available gender statistics on the level on municipalities is further disaggregated by ethnic and religious affiliation as well as spoken mother tongue. In Citizenship subfolder there is a gender-disaggregated data set for total resident population by five- year age groups, by municipalities and by citizenship. In the Educational characteristics subfolder, gender statistics by municipalities can be found further disaggregated by educational attainment, field of educational attainment (e.g. Health and welfare, Engineering, manufacturing and construction etc.), and literacy. For population currently in formal (regular) education the user could extract tables with gender statistics by level of education, field of educational attainment and by place of education (where is the education realised i.e. in foreign country, in another settlement or the settlement where the individual lives ect.).

In terms of available datasets, the largest is the Economic characteristics subfolder, containing gender statistics on working age population, active population, unemployed and supported population. There are three data sets concerning the total working age population referring to economic activity (labour force, Employed, Unemployed, Inactive), economic status (Employed, Employer, Self-employed, Unpaid family worker, Other) and type of means of transport most often used to work or school disaggregated (By walk, Bicycle, Bus (city or intercity) Car (mostly driver or mostly passenger etc.)

On active population, there are three datasets disaggregated in terms of employed by sectors of activities (e.g. agriculture, forestry and fishing, Manufacturing, Education ect.), place of work (e.g. in the in a settlement where the individual usually lives, in another or in foreign country etc.) and occupation (Legislators, senior officials and managers, Professionals, Service workers and shop and market sales workers, Elementary occupations etc.).

On unemployed persons there is one dataset containing disaggregation according to the highest level of schooling and it would be relevant if similar dataset is available for the inactive population containing variable regarding educational attainment. In this subfolder there are also available datasets with gender statistics on supported population disaggregated by characteristics of the supporter (breadwinner) for example economic status, occupation, sector of activity, and whether or not the supporter is part of household of the supported.

One dataset concerning total able-bodied population (aged 15 and over) by means of means of subsistence (e.g. salary, income, pensions social transfers etc.) does not contain gender as a variable.

In the Disability subfolder, so far, two datasets are available concerning total resident population by disability status and type of difficulty. Both data sets contain data disaggregated by gender, age groups and municipalities.

The overview of available gender statistics from the 2021 census provided in this analysis is not comprehensive since we expect more datasets to be made available on the MakStat database. It is advisable however for the SSO to update the explanatory texts (metada) to help users understand the designated categories (for example “supported population”).

The Gender Equality Index

The SSO and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2019 published the National Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia. The Index was calculated based on the methodology and framework of the Gender Equality Index for 2017, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The Macedonian edition was developed under EIGE’s cooperation with the Western Balkans and Turkey within the Instrument of Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) of the European Union.

The Gender Equality Index is calculated using a 10-step methodology for composite indicators devised by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (OECD).

The Index operationalizes the complex reality of gender equality as a multidimensional construct. It is composed of 31 indicators, divided between 14 sub-domains, which make up the six domains (work, money, knowledge, time, power and health). Satellite domains violence with 3 subdomains and 7 indicators and intersectional inequalities with 5 five intersections analyzed are not included in the calculation of the Index. The Gender Equality Index takes a value on a scale of 1 to 100, where value of 100 stands for complete gender equality, and 1 for full gender inequality.

North Macedonia scored a 62 on the Gender Equality Index in 2015, out of a maximum score of 100. As a country we lag significantly behind the EU (EU-28) average in the domains of Money and Time while we lag the least in the domain of Health, with the domain of Power being the only one where North Macedonia outperforms the EU average (EU-28). The good outcome in the area of Power is partly attributable to the larger presence of women in Parliament, which is a result of legally imposed quotas for electing members of the Parliament from the underrepresented gender.

In Table 4 it is presented the calculation framework of the Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia. In addition to the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) and Labour Force Survey (LFS), sources for data include two surveys by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofund) i.e. the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) and the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS). Furthermore, EIGE’s Gender Statistics Database, specifically, Women and men in decision-making data base is also used. Most of the indicators refer to 2015 data.

The satellite domains violence and intersectional inequalities are missing in the 2019 edition due to lack of data as explained in the report.

Table 4. Calculation framework of the Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia

Domain	Sub-domains	Concepts being measured	Indicators	Source	Year	
WORK	Participation	Full time equivalent, employment rate	Full time equivalent, employment rate (population 15+)	SSO: Labour Force Survey	2015	
		Duration of the working life	Duration of the working life	Eurostat, SSO: Mortality data and Labour Force Survey	2015	
		Sectoral segregation	Employed in education, health and social services,	% of the total employees (15+)	SSO: Labor Force Survey	2015
	Segregation and quality of work	Flexibility	Ability to take an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters (% ,15+ workers)	European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS)	2015	
		Prospects	Career prospect index (0-100 points)	European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS)	2015	

Domain	Sub-domains	Concepts being measured	Indicators	Source	Year
MONEY	Financial resources	Earnings	Average monthly earnings according to the Purchasing Power standard in the sectors B to S, excluding O (all age groups, employees in business entities with 10+ employees)	Eurostat SSO: Survey on income and living conditions (SILC)	2015
		Income	Average equivalent net-income (Purchasing power standard, population 16+)	Eurostat SSO: Survey on income and living conditions (SILC)	2015
	Economic situation	Poverty	Not at-risk-of-poverty, $\geq 60\%$ of the medial income (% , population 16+)	Eurostat SSO: Survey on income and living conditions (SILC)	2015
		Income distribution	S20/ S80 income quintile ratio (% , population 16+)		
	KNOWLEDGE	Attainment and participation	Tertiary education	Graduates of tertiary education (% , 15+ population)	SSO: Labour Force Survey
Lifelong learning			People participating in formal or non-formal education and training (% , 15+ population)	SSO: Labour Force Survey	
Segregation		Segregation	Tertiary students in the field of education, health and welfare, humanities and art (% , 15+ population)	SSO:	2015
				Labour Force Survey	

Domain	Sub-domains	Concepts being measured	Indicators	Source	Year
TIME	Care activities	Childcare activities	Persons having time to care for, and educate, their children or grandchildren, on daily basis (%, population 18+)	European Quality of Life Survey EQLS	2015
		Domestic activities	Persons having time to cook and perform domestic activities, on daily basis (%, population 18+)		
	Social activities	Sports, culture and leisure	Workers who have time to do sports, cultural or entertaining activities outside their home, on daily basis of several times a week (%, employed 15+)	European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS)	2015
		Volunteering and charitable activities	Workers who have time for voluntary or charitable activity, at least once a month (%, employed 15+)		

Domain	Sub-domains	Concepts being measured	Indicators	Source	Year
POWER	Political	Ministerial representation	Participation as ministers (%)	EIGE, WMID	2015
		Parliamentary representation	Participation as members of the Parliament (%)		
		Presence in the local self-government	Participation as members in the local level policy (%)		
	Economic	Members of boards	Participation as members in management boards, supervisory boards or board of directors in highly reputable companies (%)	EIGE, WMID	2015
		Members of Central Bank	Participation as members in the Central Bank (%)	EIGE, WMID	2015
	Social	Research	Participation as members in management bodies of organizations/institutions for financing of researches (%)	EIGE, WMID	2016
		Media	Participation as members in management bodies of national broadcasting organizations (%)	EIGE, WMID	2015
					2016
					2017
	Sports	Participation as members in management bodies of national Olympic sport organizations (%)	State Statistical Office	2015	

Domain	Sub-domains	Concepts being measured	Indicators	Source	Year
HEALTH	Status	Self-perceived health	Personal consideration of the general health condition, good or very good (% population)	SSO: Survey on Income and Living Conditions	2015
		Life expectancy	Life expectancy in absolute value at birth (years)	SSO:Demography	2015
		Healthy life years	Years of healthy life in absolute value at birth (years)	SSO: Survey on Income and Living Conditions, Mortality data	2015
	Behavior/ habits	Smoking and alcohol consumption	Persons who do not smoke and are not involved in excessive alcohol consumption (% population 16+)	simulation by SSO	2015
		Physical activity and nutrition	Percentage of persons who are physically active at least 150 min per week and consume at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables per day (% population 16+)	simulation by SSO	2015
	Access	Unmet medical needs	Population without unmet needs for medical examination (% population 16+)	Eurostat, SSO, Survey on income and living conditions (SILC)	2015
		Unmet dental needs	People without unmet needs for dental examination (% population 16+)		

Source: Bashevskva, M. (2019). Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia.

On EU level the Index has 6 editions so far, the last measurement covering 2021. For North Macedonia, this year a new, second edition of the Gender Equality Index will be published. The comprehensive conceptual and methodological framework of the Gender Equality

Index, tailored to be integral to EU gender equality policy goals and to offer comparable tracking of progress can be a good start to see where we are and to connect gender statistics with gender equality policy goals.

Key gender indicators that are missing

Gender pay gap

The gender pay gap refers to the difference in earnings between men and women expressed as a percentage of the men's earning. It is calculated based on the difference between the average gross hourly earnings and only enterprises with 10 or more employees are taken into consideration. But this is the unadjusted pay gap which does not take into consideration the labour market characteristics when comparing men's and women's average gross earnings. The adjusted pay gap on the other hand is a closer evaluation of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value since it compares women and men in the same category meaning with the same characteristics such as education, working experience or other variables that are relevant on the labour market. The adjusted pay gap is crucial to evidence gender-based discrimination since the comparison of women's and men's earnings is based on groups that are statistically equalized on other relevant variables and only gender is left as the explanatory variable producing the difference in earnings which implies unequal treatment of women and men.

The SSO does not produce data on the adjusted pay gap and has not published updated data on the unadjusted gender pay gap in nearly a decade. The only available data for this indicator is from 2010 and 2014, named as gap in earnings between women and men, available at the MakSat data base, but not under the folder of Sex Indicators, but in the folder Structure of earnings, which is a subfolder under the Labour Market thematic folder. The data on the gap (represented as a percentage) can be further disaggregated by sectors of employment, full-time and part time employment and by age groups.

The computations are based on the data from the survey Structure of earnings of employees which provides data not only on employment wages but also on the labour market characteristics of employees, such as gender, age, occupation, length of service, level of education and on the characteristics of the business entities such as economic activity, size of the business entity and region. The last available data on the Structure of earning is disseminated as a news release, containing data for 2018. The news release and the accompanying tables contain gender-disaggregated data on annual gross earnings but the indicator on the gap in earning is not updated.

During the interview with SSO representatives it was shared that SSO has the expertise to produce the indicator (staff has been trained on the methodology for computing a gender pay gap), but since the production of this indicator is not envisioned in the Programme, SSO does not have an obligation (nor resources) to produce it.

For comparison, data on the unadjusted gender pay gap is annually produced in most of the EU27 countries and it is available on Eurostat. Furthermore, Eurostat in 2018 has issued a proposal to the European Directors of Social Statistics to decompose the unadjusted gender pay gap in an adjusted or so called “unexplained gender pay gap”, based on the microdata from the structure of earnings.

In the domain of earnings SSO also produces monthly news release on the average monthly gross wage and net wage paid per employee. Both contain data disaggregated by sectors of activities but not a gender-disaggregated data.

Gender pension gap

The gender pension gap states the difference between the average pension of men and women expressed as a percentage of the average men’s pension. According to the Eurostat methodology “the pension income includes old age benefits, survivors’ benefits as well as regular pensions from individual private plans.”¹¹⁴

SSO does not disseminate data on gender pension gap, while data on the gender pension gap in NM can be found at Eurostat, last available for 2019.¹¹⁵ The indicator is computed based on the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions survey and the last edition of the survey for North Macedonia contains data for 2017 and it is published in 2018.

Unpaid care labour

Gender gaps in time devoted to unpaid care labour indicate one of the largest gender inequalities. SSO does not produce indicators on women’s and men’s share of total unpaid care work and women’s and men’s share of unpaid care work in their total work, yet it produces a survey containing data that could inform the computation of these indicators.

The Time Use Survey, which SSO produces under the Standard of Living statistics, provides data on how much time women and men, boys and girls spend on activities related to paid employment, family care, domestic work, leisure, volunteering, social life, personal care and even on sleeping. The survey is based on time-use diary and respondents are asked to record their daily activities. So far, SSO has produced two editions with data for 2009 (published in

114 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20210203-1>

115 https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_pnp13&lang=en

2011) and 2014/2015 (published in 2015)¹¹⁶. The publications contain detailed data on time use distributions disaggregated by gender, age, employment status and other relevant variables which could be used to compute indicators on gender inequalities in unpaid care work as part of the gender statistics. As an illustration this is done by Charmes (2019)¹¹⁷, and the reader can find data on North Macedonia also.

So far there is no indication on when and updated version of the Time use survey will be disseminated. The survey is part of the Programme 2018-2022¹¹⁸, and according to Eurostat the last round of Harmonised European Time Use Surveys was scheduled for 2020.¹¹⁹

Prevalence of gender-based violence

The only nationally representative survey on gender-based violence for North Macedonia is the EU-funded OSCE-led survey “ Well-being and Safety of Women ”¹²⁰ conducted in 2018 and published in 2019, based on the methodology of the European Union Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)¹²¹ that was developed for the EU-wide 2012 survey on violence against women covering the 28 EU member states. Based on the same methodology, Eurostat has also developed an adapted another GBV related survey and announced that their survey implementation has started in 18 EU countries in 2020 and that the data collection process should be finished in 2023.¹²²

SSO representatives¹²³ confirmed that the survey is also planned to be conducted in North Macedonia, as briefly announced on their website under the IPA II funded activities, but the whole process got delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the foreseen official Census of the Population and Dwellings of North Macedonia that was postponed twice within the designated period and already considered a vital national priority. It was further confirmed that this GBV related survey will take place in 2022.

116 https://www.stat.gov.mk/PublikaciiPoOblast_en.aspx?id=58&rbrObl=13

117 Charmes, J. 2019. The Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market. An analysis of time use data based on the latest World Compilation of Time-use Surveys. International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2019. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3824AoA>

118 <https://www.stat.gov.mk/pdf/FiveYearProgramme2018-2022.pdf>

119 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/time-use-surveys>

120 https://www.speakactchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Safety-and-wellbeing-of-women-in-N-Macedonia_OSCE-research.pdf

121 https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-technical-report-1_en.pdf

122 <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/wdn-20211004-1>

123 Information received during the key expert interviews with SSO employees and management during the summer 2021

Available administrative data from authorized bodies for state statistics

According to the Law on Statistics official statistical data of the Republic of Macedonia are data published by the State Statistical Office and authorised bodies, in accordance with the Programme of Statistical Surveys¹²⁴; other authorized bodies to carry out statistical surveys are: The National Bank, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, The Employment Agency, The Institute for Public Health, and The Hydrometeorological Service and Pension and Disability Insurance Fund.

Before we give overview of available data it is important to raise the issue of quality standards related to official statistics produced by other authorised bodies. Although the inventory of authorised bodies for state statistics is included in LSS and the Programme, questions may arise as to whether the data produced is official statistics or administrative evidence. Based on the Peer Review on the Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice¹²⁵, as a core quality framework for official statistics, it has been concluded that from the eight authorised bodies for official statistics, only the National Bank is in compliance with the principles and indicators of the CoP while other authorised bodies are still at early stages of internalising the CoP, although they are aware of the CoP. The Peer Review report rationalises the state of affairs indicating that “professional independence, quality management, impartiality, relevance, coherence and accessibility” (p. 13) as concepts relevant to the principles of CoP require “careful and shared interpretation” by the authorised bodies of the National Statistical System whereas currently nearly all authorised bodies do not have established statistical functions within their organizational structure¹²⁶. To further the accountability within the national statistical system and strengthen the standards, the Peer Review recommends for SSO “to establish and chair Coordination Committee for the NSS responsible for promoting a shared interpretation of the CoP as it applies to all relevant national authorities and in particular of its principle of professional independence” (p. 5). The Committee was established in 2019 and in its mandate has the authority to evaluate the compliance with the CoP by all relevant national authorities. However no publicly available record of such assessment is available and the last published annual reports state that the Committee did not hold any meetings in 2019 and 2020.^{127, 128} It is noteworthy that the president and the members of the Committee are

124 Law on State Statistics. Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 54/97, 21/07, 51/11, 104/13, 42/14, 192/15, 27/16, 83/18 and 220/18.

125 Alldritt, R., de Pourbaix, I. & Carlquist, T. (2017). Peer Review on the Implementation of the European Statistics Code of Practice in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the coordination role of the State Statistical Office, p.22. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3jD4hJH>

126 It is noted that even the Ministry of Finance does not have a head of statistics at a senior level

127 State Statistical Office (2020). Годишен извештај за работата на Државниот завод за статистика во 2019 [Annual Report on the work of the State Statistical Office in 2019].

128 State Statistical Office (2021). Годишен извештај за работата на Државниот завод за статистика во 2020 [Annual Report on the work of the State Statistical Office in 2020]. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3BENn3L>

appointed and dismissed by the Government of North Macedonia, which in practice could be in collision with the principle of professional independence. The later could be especially relevant having in mind that one of the key recommendations of the Peer Review mission is for the SSO to take steps to ensure that the principle of professional independence is fully understood at the top levels of Government. In the Programme for 2018-2022, a total of 319 statistical surveys are included, implemented by 9 authorised bodies (see Table 5) and organised in 3 domains: Demographic and social statistics (32% of the total number of surveys), Economic statistics (63%) and environment and multi-domain statistics (5%). The surveys relevant for gender statistics are the demographic and social statistics, which account for nearly one third of the total number of surveys envisioned to be implemented during the five-year period. Economic, environment and multi-domain statistics are also important when it comes to gender mainstreaming and related policies; however, we need to bear in mind the complexity as well as the nature of some of these surveys and assume that only those that involve individuals as subjects (or respondents) can allow for a smooth introduction of a gender variable that can further gender-disaggregated data in different areas of interest.

Table 5. Distribution of surveys per authorized body as envisioned in the Programme (2018-2022)

Authorised body	Number of surveys	Percentage of total
State Statistical Office	252	79,0%
National Bank of NM	27	8,5%
Ministry of Finance	3	0,9%
Ministry of Interior	6	1,9%
Ministry of Justice	1	0,3%
Employment Agency of the RNM	4	1,3%
Institute of Public Health of the RNM	18	5,6%
Hydrometeorological Service	3	0,9%
Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of NM	5	1,6%

In order to assess the nature of existing data and availability of gender-disaggregated data in different areas, we sent requests to all listed authorized bodies asking them to list all variables concerning individuals for which they systematically collect administrative gender-disaggregated data.

We received answers from 5 out of 8 contacted authorised bodies and we briefly describe the results below.

Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance officially responded that their institution is not authorised to collect data related to variables that describe individuals, and that they contribute to the official statistics with data on public debt and the state budget, such as data on realized revenues and expenditures of all budget accounts, compared with the projected revenues and approved expenditures.

Ministry of Interior

From the Ministry of Interior, we received answer that the institution systematically logs gender-disaggregated data for 9 variables, listed in the table X. It is interesting to note that among the listed are not variables referring both to victims and perpetrators for misdemeanors although Reactor has received data on this from MI for another research project. It is unclear whether the Ministry had subsequently disaggregated the data upon our requested or the institutions regularly logs it but did not list it.

Table 6. Gender-disaggregated data collected by the Ministry of Interior

1. Victims of more characteristic crimes
2. Victims of domestic violence crimes
3. Perpetrators of crimes related to domestic violence
4. Victims of traffic accidents
5. Victims of suicide
6. Victims of suicide attempts
7. Victims of accidents at work
8. Victim of accidents
9. Persons residing in the Reception Center for foreigners

Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice did not send us a response to our FOI request.

Employment Agency

The Employment Agency did not send a response to our FOI request, but it regularly publishes gender-disaggregated data for 8 variables concerning unemployed persons, further decomposed by other relevant variables such as age and level of education, and gender disaggregated data on registered unemployed persons with disabilities.

Table 7. Gender-disaggregated data collected by the Employment Agency

1. Registered unemployed persons by age
2. Registered unemployed persons by level of education
3. Registered unemployed persons according to the waiting time for employment
4. Registered unemployed persons by nationality
5. Inflow and outflow of unemployed persons
6. Registered unemployed persons with disabilities by age structure
7. Registered unemployed persons with disabilities by level of education
8. Registered unemployed persons with disabilities by type of disability

Institute for Public Health

The Institute for Public Health did not send an answer to the FOI request. On their website they publish reports containing gender-disaggregated data but it could not be compiled a comprehensive list of all variables disaggregated by gender.

Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of NM

The pension and Disability Insurance Fund responded that all statistical data is published on the institution's website. The only gender-disaggregated data that was available was monthly data on new and deceased pension beneficiaries. But the institution, does not publish gender-disaggregated data on monthly pensions, although such data could be decomposed from the records the institution has and could be crucial for quantifying gender inequalities.

Table 8. Gender-disaggregated data collected by the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund

1. New pension beneficiaries for January 2022
2. Deceased pension beneficiaries for the month of January 2022

National Bank

The National Bank of NM responded that it collects gender-disaggregated data on four variables related to loans.

Table 9. Gender-disaggregated data collected by the National Bank

1. Gender structure of loans approved by domestic household banks, balance at the end of the year
2. Number of borrowers
3. Number of credit agreements
4. Loan balance (in millions of denars)

Available administrative data from other national institution that could be used to inform gender statistics

According to the Law on Public Sector Data Use¹²⁹, public sector authorities and institutions are obliged to publish data they create in the exercise of their powers (Article 5) and in addition the data produced should be available for free (Article 10). Furthermore, the MIOA is obligated to keep a central public sector data catalogue that needs to list all data produced during exercise of their power. According to the Law on Public Sector Data Use, this catalogue also needs to contain metadata with links to where the available datasets are published. The Central public sector catalogue should be available online and it is currently accessible at: www.data.gov.mk (not on the domain www.otvorenipodatoci.gov.mk as stated in the Law). Presently, there are 514 data sets and 69 registered organizations¹³⁰. The Open Data Strategy (2018-2020)¹³¹, describes the open data principles, more specifically the principal of timely, complete and granular data, explains that granularity where possible should be realized with gender divided data to support gender equality policies, however the portal does not allow users to filter data referring to persons. Searching by the keyword “sex” we found only two datasets -Domestic violence perpetrators and its relation to the victims, a data set from Ministry of Internal Affairs and Children by nationality, sex and age group in kindergartens and day care centres, data set by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Although the currently available centralized data catalogue does not allow us to map administrative data sets comprehensively, we tried to identify national

129 https://www.mioa.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl_files/documents/legislation/zakon_za_koristenje_na_podatocite_od_javniot_sektor-eng.pdf

130 Organizations are defined as: “bodies and public institutions that create, manage and publish collections of datasets in an open data format, organized in special data sets on the portal.” <https://data.gov.mk/en/organization/>

131 https://mioa.gov.mk/sites/default/files/pbl_files/documents/strategies/open_data_strategy_en.pdf

institutions that are not part of the official statistical system but could produce administrative records that might be important to inform gender statistics. We can take the Agency of Real Estate Cadastre (Cadastre) as an important example. According to its website, the Cadastre is actively involved in the process of creating, implementing, and monitoring gender equality policies and promoting the principle of introducing equal participation of women and men in the area for which it is responsible.¹³² However, the only publicly available gender-disaggregated data is a brief overview on the ownership of land across 30 municipalities in the country. In prior communication with the Cadastre, for the purpose of computing the Gender Equality Index of Local Municipalities, back in 2018, Reactor had a specific request to the Cadastre for provision of data on ownership of land and buildings/objects disaggregated by gender and municipality. At that time, the Agency did not have the disaggregated data in their systems and, yet, they could still produce such data on men's and women's ownership rights based on the data they could extract from the unique personal identification number. As stipulated in the Law on the Unique Personal Identification Number,¹³³ this number contains 13 digits, and the last three before the final check sum number are indicative of person's sex i.e. all numbers up to 499 are for males and 500 to 999 are females. So, the conclusion is that any data referring to individuals that are directly connected to the unique personal ID number in a specific data base could be disaggregated by sex.

Similar conclusions apply to the Public Revenue Office, in relation to data on average salaries disaggregated by gender and municipality. The institution does not have such data on average salaries, as directly available, but it has taxpayers' aggregated data related to payment of salaries that can be used as an approximation in the calculations. This institution does not have a gender-disaggregated data as part of their systematic data collection logs but it also is nevertheless able to disaggregate such data based on the unique personal identification number.

Another important institutional link is the judiciary. Namely, the judiciary in North Macedonia is obliged to implement the current Automated Courts Case Management Information System (ACCMIS), which is a case management system designed inter alia to support the monitoring and evaluation of the justice system activities. This application stores all basic data for all the court cases and all documents produced during any judicial proceedings.¹³⁴ However, based on responses to FOI requests we have sent for gender-disaggregated data from primary courts, we can safely conclude that the system does not log any gender/sex

132 An official statement on gender equality on the Agency for Real Estate Cadastre website. Available at: <https://www.katastar.gov.mk/%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B0-%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%BD%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%81%D1%82/>

133 Law on Unique Personal Identification Number. Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia No. 137/13 and 22/16. Available at: <https://praksis.mk/Document/Index/?Id=96617&type=1>

134 Strategy For Information Communication Technology Of Justice Sector For 2019 – 2024. Available At: <https://www.pravda.gov.mk/Upload/Documents/Strategy-ICT-2019-2024%20.pdf>

variables relating to the persons involved in the judicial proceedings (e.g. defendant and/or plaintiff). The Public Prosecution, which is an important part of the judiciary system, has its own IT case management system and the conclusion based on provided answers to our FOI requests, remains the same - their system does not record gender/sex as a variable and in case we want to explore and gender-related occurrences with the system, each particular case has to be analysed in hard copy and by hand.

The Swedish example

Swedish gender equality policy

Sweden has a long history of setting milestones on the path to gender equality. Sweden has had equal inheritance rights for men and women since 1845, women were first elected to the Swedish parliament in 1921, and the institute for equal pay for equal labour for public employees was established in 1947. In 1969, compulsory school curricula encouraging and promoting gender equality were introduced; in 1974, the parent allowance was introduced, giving both men and women parental leave rights following childbirth; and in 1979, Sweden's first gender equality law mandating equality between men and women in the labour market was passed.¹³⁵

Gender equality was formed as a separate policy issue in Sweden in the early 1970s, and the policy approach to gender equality has altered and evolved through time.¹³⁶ Gender mainstreaming has been a key strategy for implementing gender equality policy since 1994, suggesting that a gender perspective should be incorporated into all decisions in all policy domains and at all levels.¹³⁷ Gender responsive budgeting is an important instrument for gender mainstreaming because no budgetary allocation can be gender neutral. Gender equality is created where resources are dispersed and decisions are made, according to gender mainstreaming.

135 Statistics Sweden (2020). Women and men in Sweden 2020 Facts and figures. Available at: https://www.scb.se/contentassets/95ffcd4b3f394877abb3bd41e40df0a0/1e0201_2019b20_br_x10br2002eng.pdf

136 Government Offices of Sweden, Ministry of Employment Gender equality policy in Sweden. A feminist Government. Available at: <https://www.government.se/490563/contentassets/efcc5a15ef154522a872d8e46ad69148/gender-equality-policy-in-sweden2>

137 Swedish Gender Equality Agency (Last accessed 10.03.2022) Gender Mainstreaming. Available: <https://jamstalldhetsmyndigheten.se/swedish-gender-equality-agency/gender-equality-in-sweden/gender-mainstreaming/>

In 2006, a government bill titled [The Power to Shape Society and Your Own Life: Towards New Gender Equality Policy Objectives] (2005/06:155) was adopted with a broad political consensus defining the Swedish gender equality policy.¹³⁸ Gender equality is and overall goal is envisioned as: *Women and men shall have the same power to shape society and their own lives.*¹³⁹ To achieve this four subgoals are set: gender equal division of power and influence, economic gender equality, a gender equal division of unpaid housework and provision of care and men's violence against women must stop.¹⁴⁰

In 2014 Sweden proudly declared the world's first feminist Government, and in 2015 appointed the first Ambassador for Gender Equality, responsible for governing Sweden's feminist foreign policy.

In 2016, the Government issued a document titled Power, Aims and Authority – Feminist Policy for a Gender-Equal Future (2016/17:10) that traces the future gender equality policy for Sweden.¹⁴¹ The communique handed to the parliament, re-states the commitment to the previously formulated 4 policy sub-objectives adding 2 additional subgoals gender equal education and gender equal health. To monitor the implementation of the gender mainstreaming and the approximation towards the strategic sub-goals, the document sets ground for the establishment of the Swedish Gender Equality Agency.¹⁴²

Sweden has a Minister for Gender Equality, and the Gender Equality Agency has been in place since 2018, coordinating and promoting the gender-mainstreaming of all policy processes and governmental institutions.¹⁴³

138 Swedish Gender Equality Agency (Last accessed 10.03.2022) Gender equality in Sweden. Available: <https://jamstalldhetismyndigheten.se/swedish-gender-equality-agency/gender-equality-in-sweden/>

139 Ibid.

140 Ibid.

141 Government Offices of Sweden (March 2017). Government Communication 'Power, goals and agency – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future'. Available at: <https://www.government.se/49c517/globalassets/government/dokument/socialdepartementet/summary-of-the-government-communication-power-goals-and-agency--a-feminist-policy.pdf>

142 Ibid.

143 Government Offices of Sweden, Ministry of Employment Gender equality policy in Sweden (2019). A feminist Government. Available at: <https://www.government.se/490563/contentassets/efcc5a15ef154522a872d8e46ad69148/gender-equality-policy-in-sweden2>

Statistics Sweden

Gender statistics as a policy imperative

The Swedish gender equality policy recognizes that gender i.e. sex disaggregated statistics and gender analyses are crucial for evidencing the inequalities between women and men and the eventual changes towards closing the gender gaps. Since 1994 all official statistics related to individuals in Sweden must be disaggregated by sex unless there are special reasons for not doing so (Article 14 of the Official Statistics Ordinance, 2001: 100)¹⁴⁴ and special guidelines and support for the application of Article 14 are produced by Statistics Sweden- the official Government agency on statistics. The paragraph stipulating sex-disaggregated data is under the Section on *Accessibility*, and it is important to note that Statistics Sweden explicitly states that statistics should be presented in a such a way that it will be easily accessible to users.

In Power, Aims and Authority – Feminist Policy for a Gender-Equal Future (2016/17:10) the Swedish Government states that accesses to gender statistics is imperative and that all government agencies shall be required to present data concerning individuals disaggregated by sex in their annual reports.¹⁴⁵ In its efforts to further gender mainstream the Budget Bill, in 2017 the Ministry of Finance instructed all ministries to formulate policy proposals based on gender equality impact analysis, and guides and trainings on gender analysis were tailored for officials. This led to more systematic use of gender statistics.

Statistics Sweden

Statistics Sweden is responsible for coordinating the system for the official statistics of Sweden. It has about 1300 employees¹⁴⁶ and three departments: Data Management, Economic Statistics and Analysis Information Technology, and Social Statistics and Analysis. In addition, the organizational structure is comprised of Executive Office, Director General and the Deputy Director General. Under the executive office there are eight specialized functions: Data Protection, Human Resources (support unit), Internal Audit, Communication (support unit), Methodology and Architecture Governance (support unit), Corporate Management (support unit), Security, and, Business Management and Support (support unit).

144 Statistics Sweden (2019). Annual report 2018. Available at: https://www.scb.se/contentassets/57ebb90a69ab49aeb4fc7cfa5e7aab2f/ov9999_2018a01_br_x43br1903.pdf

145 Government Offices of Sweden (March 2017). Government Communication 'Power, goals and agency – a feminist policy for a gender-equal future'. Available at: <https://www.government.se/49c517/globalassets/government/dokument/socialdepartementet/summary-of-the-government-communication-power-goals-and-agency--a-feminist-policy.pdf>

146 Statistics Sweden (Last accessed 10.03.2022). About Statistics Sweden. Available: <https://www.scb.se/en/About-us/>

According to a government decision, official statistics are organized into 23 topic areas and 115 statistics areas. The government has designated 29 government bodies to be in charge of official statistics in their various fields. Gender statistics is part of the Living conditions as subject area and Statistics Sweden is responsible for collecting the data on this statistic area.¹⁴⁷

Statistics Sweden has a team dedicated to promoting the creation of gender-disaggregated data. The unit has been in operation since 1983 and has been a regulatory requirement since 1994.¹⁴⁸ During the group interview with representatives from Statistics Sweden, it was shared that the unit in charge of gender statistics is comprised of three employees working full time on gender statistics coordination.

Gender statistic is presented as a statistics illustrating the development of the society from a gender perspective. Statistics Sweden presents the gender statistics in a biannual publication, *Women and Men in Sweden* and online data bases presenting gender statistics on national level and on the level on counties/ municipalities.

Women and Men in Sweden

In 2014 Statistics Sweden celebrated 30 years of the first publication of *Women and Men in Sweden. Facts and Figures*, a biannual booklet exclusively devoted on gender statistics. The publication covers statistics on: population, health and social care, education, time use, parental insurance, gainful employment, wages/salaries, income, influence and power, and crime (including violence against women). The publication also offers overview of the gender equality policy in the country, including a short introduction on the gender machinery and policy subgoals, as well as a timeline listing all milestones on the progress toward gender equality, starting from 1845. The introduction on the gender equality and statistics explicitly states that: "Women and men must be visible in the statistics" (p.5), furthermore citing the article 14 of the Official Statistics Ordinance (2001:100) sets forth that official statistics based on individuals should be broken down by sex unless there are specific reasons for not doing so.¹⁴⁹

The introduction also defines an equal sex distribution i.e. when at least 40% are women or men, meaning that when more than 60% are women it is a female-dominated, whereas if more than 60% are men it is a male-dominated. This is in a way operational definition and the booklet questions whether it is gender equality if women are always near 40% and men are always near 60%.

147 Statistics Sweden (Last accessed 10.03.2022). Official Statistics of Sweden. Available: <https://www.scb.se/en/About-us/official-statistics-of-sweden/>

148 EIGE (Last accessed 10.03.2022). Sweden. Available at: <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/countries/sweden>

149 Statistics Sweden (2020). Women and men in Sweden 2020 Facts and figures. Available at: https://www.scb.se/contentassets/95ffcd4b3f394877abb3bd41e40df0a0/le0201_2019b20_br_x10br2002eng.pdf

When presenting the data on all ten areas, the booklet offers time-series data and an interpretation of trends (e.g., reflecting on changes at the labour market from the 1970s and 1980s). Changes in the methodology of respective surveys (e.g. definition of variables or categories), that might introduce a breakage in time-series data are also explained so the reader can have an informed judgment on what is comparable. In addition, changes in regulations or policy are also summarized in terms of how they affect the comparability of data (e.g. the change of disburseable days for care of a closely related person in from 60 days to 100 days in 2010, is commented in the chart presenting the time series data). When an increase or decrease is stated, the narration offers explanations if this is contingent on change in another variable (e.g., explaining the increase in the number of reported cases of assault since the 1990s it is stated that this may be due to a greater tendency to report violent crime, i.e. the number of unreported cases has decreased).

Being true to its mission of offering facts and figures the booklet presents contextual information on policies that are important for the interpretation of the data (e.g., changes in regulations related to parental allowances 1974–2019 presented in a timeline of milestones is offered in the section on parental insurance).

Online data bases on gender statistics- Integrating policy objectives on gender equality with statistics

Since 2012 Statistics Sweden, on their website, present indicators that follow-up the Government's gender equality sub-goals. It was ordered by the Government to assess if the measures of the Governments gender equality policies had any effect.¹⁵⁰ The thematic web¹⁵¹ page references the two policy documents that shaped the formulation of the indicators under each policy sub-goal. The indicators for Sub-Goals 1, 2, 4 and 6, are developed based on the document, *Power to shape society and one's own life – new goals in gender equality policy* (Prop. 2005/06:155), whereas the indicators within sub-goals 3 and 5 are based on the descriptions in *Power goals and authority – feminist politics for an equal future* (Skr 2016/17:10).

In this way, gender statistics is integrated with the gender equality policy, quantifying the gaps and distributions over time. The statistics illustrate both the progress toward the overall goal of women and men having equal power to shape society and their own lives, and the efficacy of government measures to achieve the change.

In table 10 presented are the gender-equality sub-goals, as defined within the policy documents (and on the thematic webpage for gender statistics)¹⁵² and the number of

150 Shared during the interview with Statistics Sweden

151 Statistics Sweden (Last accessed 10.03.2022). Tema jämställdhet. Available at: <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/temaomraden/jamstallldhet/>

152 Ibid.

devised indicators divided under topics. The gender equality web page of Statistics Sweden presents in total 173 indicators with gender-disaggregated data, all at national level that are updated twice every year. For each indicator there is a metadata on the production and the quality.

Table 10

Gender equality policy sub-goals	Description provided	Statistical indicators divided by topic
An equal distribution of power and influence	Women and men must have the same rights and opportunities to be active citizens and be able to shape the terms for decision-making.	27 indicators divided in: 1. Participation in civic activities 2. Union representation 3. Representation in business 4. Representation in the public sector 5. Representation in politics 6. Other representation
Financial equality between women and men	Women and men must have the same opportunities and terms as regards paid work that provides financial independence throughout their lives.	37 indicators divided in: 1. Entrepreneurship 2. Income and wages 3. Sickness and sick leave 4. Labor force participation and employment

Gender equality policy sub-goals	Description provided	Statistical indicators divided by topic
Equal education	Women and men, girls and boys must have the same opportunities and conditions as regards education, choice of studies and personal development.	42 indicators divided in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Educational level of the population 2. Eligible for upper secondary school 3. Eligible for higher education Establishment in the labor market after studies 4. Folk high school 5. Elementary school 6. Upper secondary school University 7. Non-formal education 8. Informal learning 9. Municipal adult 10. Staff 11. Swedish language teaching for immigrants 12. Well-being and stress in school Polytechnic
Equal distribution of unpaid care and household work	Women and men must have the same responsibility for housework and must have the possibility to provide and receive care on equal terms.	12 indicators divided in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distribution of paid and unpaid work 2. Relatives' allowance and care allowance 3. Unpaid work- Care of children

Gender equality policy sub-goals	Description provided	Statistical indicators divided by topic
Equal health	Women and men, girls and boys must have the same conditions for good health and be offered healthcare on equal terms.	<p>40 indicators divided in:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Addiction and dependence 2. The social services' efforts for children and young people 3. Support and service for certain disabled people 4. Elderly care 5. Satisfaction with care, complaints and criticism 6. Pregnancy and childbirth 7. Life expectancy and causes of death 8. Disability compensation and care allowance 9. Ongoing illness 10. The ill health rate and the Sickness benefit rate 11. Workforce affiliation for people with disabilities 12. Body Mass Index (BMI) 13. Training and sports 14. Tobacco and alcohol 15. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) 16. Mental well-being 17. Self-rated health

Gender equality policy sub-goals	Description provided	Statistical indicators divided by topic
Men's violence against women must stop	Women and men, girls and boys must have the same rights and opportunities in terms of physical integrity	15 indicators divided in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prosecuted 2. Reported crimes 3. Exposure 4. Concern

*Concern¹⁵³

Gender statistics for counties and municipalities

In addition to the gender statistics on national level, Statistics Sweden presents online data base for gender statistics on counties and municipalities on six subject areas: population, education, children and family, gainful employment, income, power, and influence¹⁵⁴. In total 21 indicators are provided with gender disaggregated data for each of the 21 counties. Some indicators are from administrative records, and some are from surveys with presented metrics on uncertainty. All indicators have metadata. In addition to the indicators constituting the six themes, for each county supplemental data is provided listing 23 variables including data on gender-based violence.

Table 11. Available gender statistics for counties and municipalities

Population	1. Population
	2. Population by native and foreign born
	3. Population by age group
	4. Population by foreign and domestic born and age group
	5. Native born
	6. Migrations and migration surpluses
	7. Migration surplus within/outside the county

153 Gender equality statistics on insecurity and anxiety about being exposed to violent crime and on the proportion of women and men who choose another road or mode of transport because of it.

154 Statistics Sweden (Last accessed 10.03.2022). Jämställdhet i län och kommuner. Available at: <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/temaomraden/jamstalldhet/jamstalldhet-i-lan-och-kommuner/>

Education	1. Education level for the population 25-44 years
	2. Education level for the population 45-64 years
	3. Graduates and students of qualified vocational education and polytechnic in the county
Gainful employment	1. Employed by age group
	2. Employed persons 20-64 years after native and foreign born
	3. Employed 16-64 years after usually working time per week
	4. Gainful employment 16+ years by sector
	5. Commuters and non-commuters 16+ years old
	6. Combined earned income for persons aged 20-64
	7. Average disposable income for households 18+ years
Power and influence	1. Managers 16-64 years by sector affiliation
	2. Managers 16-64 years in the county by sector affiliation and main group
	3. Members of the City Council
	4. Members of the Regional Council by Party

Recommendations

The following recommendations address a wider scope of potential improvements toward better gender mainstreaming of the official national statistics and improved cooperation and coordination among key national stakeholders. It is important to underline that all relevant policy and decision-making bodies and the key national machinery for statistics need to make coordinated efforts and political will is also needed to foster sooner progress.

Gender mainstreaming the statistical system

- Update the Law on statistics to state specifically that all data concerning individuals should be broken down by sex.
- Ensure that the new Law on Gender Equality defines and recognizes gender statistics.
- Formalize the responsibility to gender-mainstream the statistical system through coordinative mechanism or competent unit within the statistical system.
- The official gender-equality policy should define coherent structure of policy (sub)goals operationalized through gender indicators within the official statistics. Gender indicators should be selected through inclusive and deliberative processes within the producers-users dialogue. The structure of selected indicators should be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of policy interventions and to systematically track changes over time. The collection of gender indicators should be publicly available as data base managed by SSO.
- Efforts should be made for the production of the Gender Equality Index to be institutionalised within the official gender statistics.
- SSO should be able to exercise its authority to anticipate needs for gender statistics. Expertise for gender statistics could be increased through international practice exchange and trainings.
- Gender-mainstream the next Five-Year Statistical Programme as a key by-law that determines which statistical surveys will be implemented. Consultative processes should incorporate expertise on gender issues.
- Existing practices should recognize possible gender biases in the collection, processing, storage, and presentation of statistical data. Systematic

deliberations should be done for the official statistics to reflect acute gender issues, intersectionality and diversity.

- Data from the new census should be utilized to develop gender indicators data base for municipalities.
- Within the producers-users dialogue, SSO with other stakeholders should work on raising statistical literacy and use of gender statistics. The Ministry of Education and Science and the Bureau for Education Development in collaboration with the SSO should consider inclusion of modules on statistical literacy in standard curricula.
- Gender statistics as a concept should be recognized within the operative practices of the other authorized bodies for state statistics. Authorized bodies for state statistics should have updated publicly available records of the gender-disaggregated statistics. All authorized bodies should invest efforts to publish data in formats that are adapted for data processing.
- The Coordination Committee and SSO should work with authorised bodies to strengthen its capacities to internalize principles and indicators of the European statistics Code of Practice and to ensure quality of the produced statistics, including gender statistics. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy should be taken into consideration as a potential authorised body to increase the availability of social statistics and gender statistics.
- Sufficient budgetary allocations should be in place for staff and expertise retention and development and for the SSO to be able to exercise its authority as a coordinative body within the official state statistical system.

Available Gender Indicators

- Women and Men in North Macedonia should include a comprehensive overview of gender statistics. More specifically it should include available official data on unpaid labour and inequalities in time use, power and decision making, ownership and gender-based violence. Efforts should be made for relevant indicators such as gender pay gap (adjusted and unadjusted) and gender pension gap to be included. The publication should contain aggregate statistics from last available Time Use Survey, Survey on income and living conditions, Structure of earnings survey among others.
- Efforts should be made for Women and Men in North Macedonia to include more comprehensive overview of data from the other authorized bodies for state statistics, such as Institute for Public Health, National Bank,

Ministry of Interior Ministry of Justice Employment Agency, and Pension and Disability Insurance Fund.

- Gender statistics in Women and Men in North Macedonia should be contextualized with references (where and when possible) to the gender-equality policy framework. Changes in data over time should be interpreted in reference to possible reduction or increase of gender inequalities. Where relevant, users should be informed if methodological changes in the respective surveys might have had implication in observed changes in time series data, so not to be interpreted as factual changes related to gender inequalities.
- Women and Men in North Macedonia should contain reflections on intersectional inequalities and where available data should be disaggregated by variables that designate marginalized categories as recognized within the policy framework.
- Because it provides flexible and targeted access to gender statistics, efforts should be made to keep the Gender indicators folder on MakStat database up to date and enriched with data from various thematic areas, territorial levels, and sources. To give a comprehensive and intelligible overview, the list of indicators should be organized in thematic areas or under a framework of specific policy goals. The folder should be further supplemented with gender-disaggregated data for municipalities produced with the 2021 census.
- The production of the National Gender Equality Index for North Macedonia, should be institutionalized to follow the next editions on EU level. Data on violence and intersectional inequalities should be incorporated in the next edition of Index for North Macedonia.
- The comprehensive conceptual and methodological framework of the Gender Equality Index, tailored to be integral to EU gender equality policy goals and to offer comparable tracking of progress, can be a good place to start to see where we are and to connect gender statistics with gender equality policy goals.

Available administrative data from national institution that could be used to inform gender equality policy

- SSO should explore potential administrative data sources for gender statistics and should develop procedures to ensure quality of the administrative data to elevate it to official statistics.

- Public entities should comply with their legal obligations to publish gender-disaggregated data. The IT infrastructure for administrative data management should be adapted accordingly and sufficient budgetary and expertise allocations should be made by authoritative bodies.
- The central public sector data catalogue should be updated to incorporate data sets with gender-disaggregated data.

Gender equality at a glance

In light of the thematic area at the focus of this gender analysis and the previously delineated Swedish example, at the end of this document we have tried to summarize some of the key gender statistics, collected through diverse accessible and available sources, and group them under the six main goals behind the Swedish Government's gender equality commitments (i.e. 4 policy sub-objectives and 2 additional subgoals)¹⁵⁵:

- Equal distribution of power and influence
- Financial equality between women and men
- Equal distribution of unpaid care and household work
- Equal education
- Equal Health
- Men's violence against women must stop

Some graphical illustrations provide EU benchmark figures and percentages for a quick comparison on the situation in EU and North Macedonia, others mainly focus on the national state of play and briefly illustrate why sooner actions are needed in the specified policy areas and sub-areas. We have taken the liberty to use the Swedish example for the specific objectives and policy areas, while waiting for the new National Gender Equality Strategy to see the light of the day and in the absence of specific national goals and an overarching gender equality framework.

155 <https://www.government.se/49c517/globalassets/government/dokument/socialdepartementet/summary-of-the-government-communication-power-goals-and-agency--a-feminist-policy.pdf>

Equal distribution of power and influence

Members of the government (share of women)

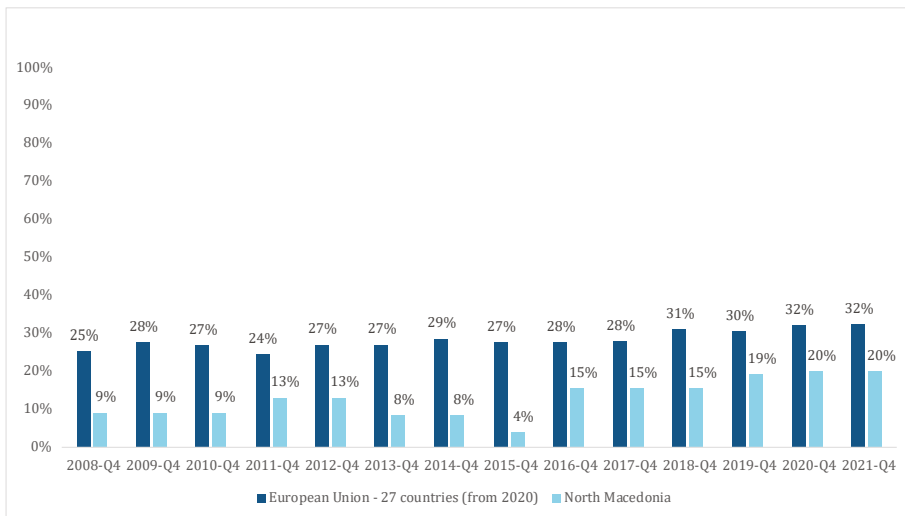


Figure 1

Source: The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Gender Statistics Database.

Members of parliament/assembly (share of women)

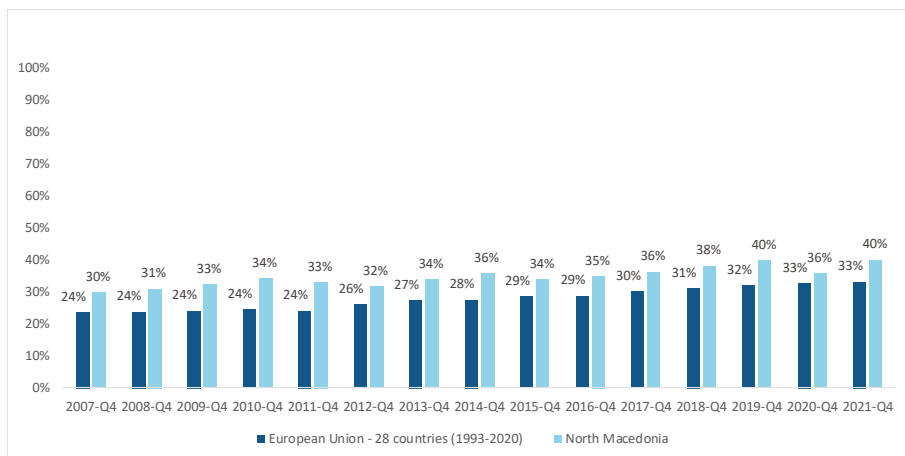


Figure 2

Source: The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), Gender Statistics Database

Financial equality between women and men

Employment rates (from 15 to 64 years)

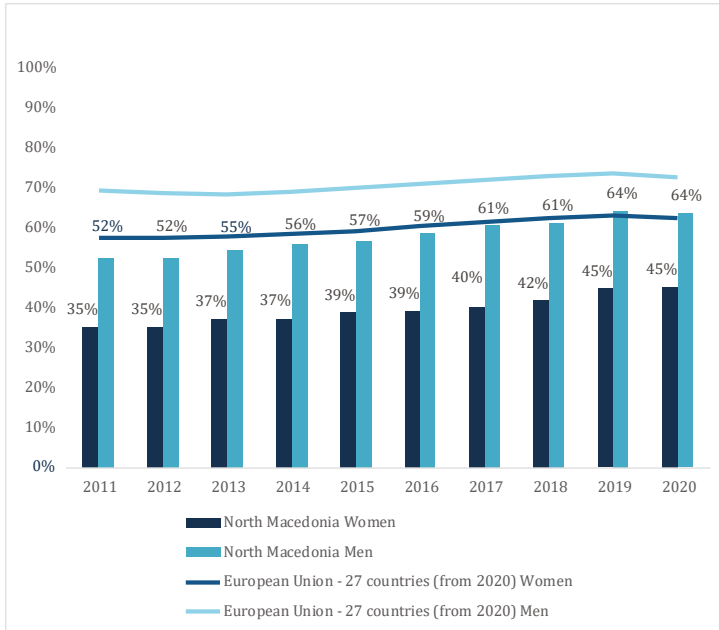


Figure 3

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey.

Employment rates (2020) by age groups

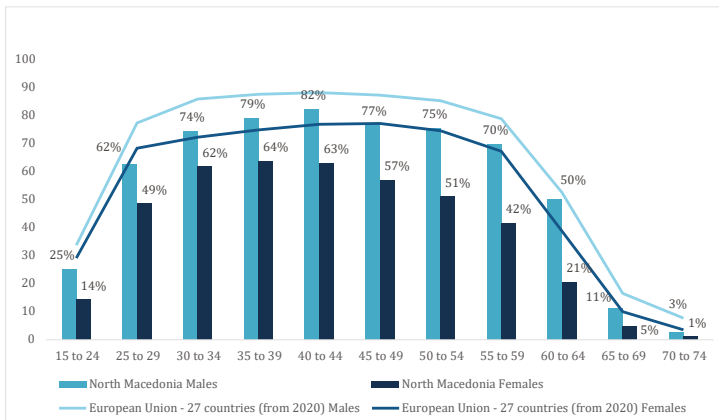


Figure 4

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey.

Activity rates (from 15 to 64 years)

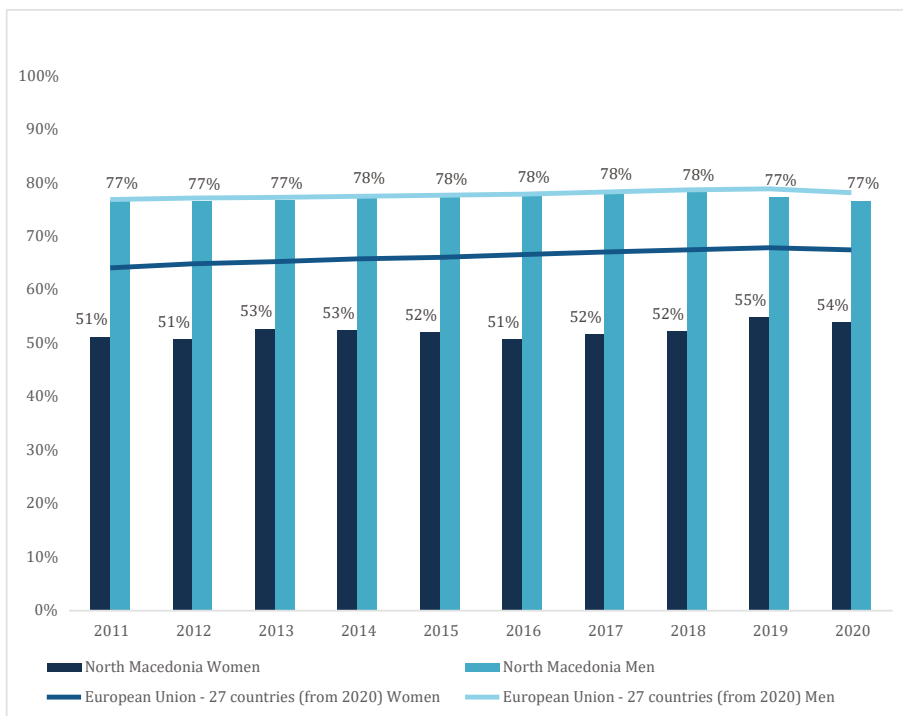


Figure 5

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey.

Land ownership (2019)

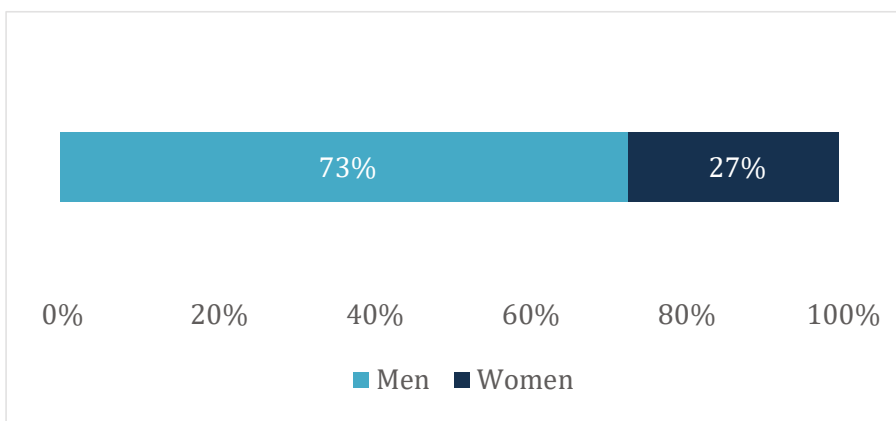


Figure 6

Source: Agency for Real Estate Cadastre – Republic of North Macedonia

Car ownership (2020)

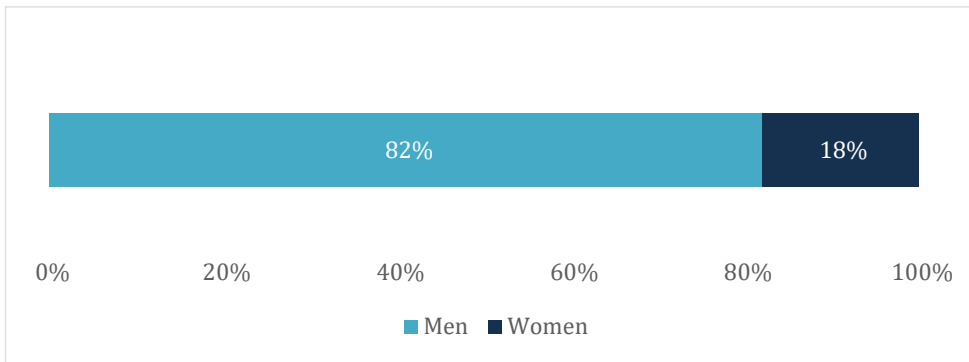


Figure 7

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs (Freedom of Information Request)

Gender pension gap (from 65 to 74 years)

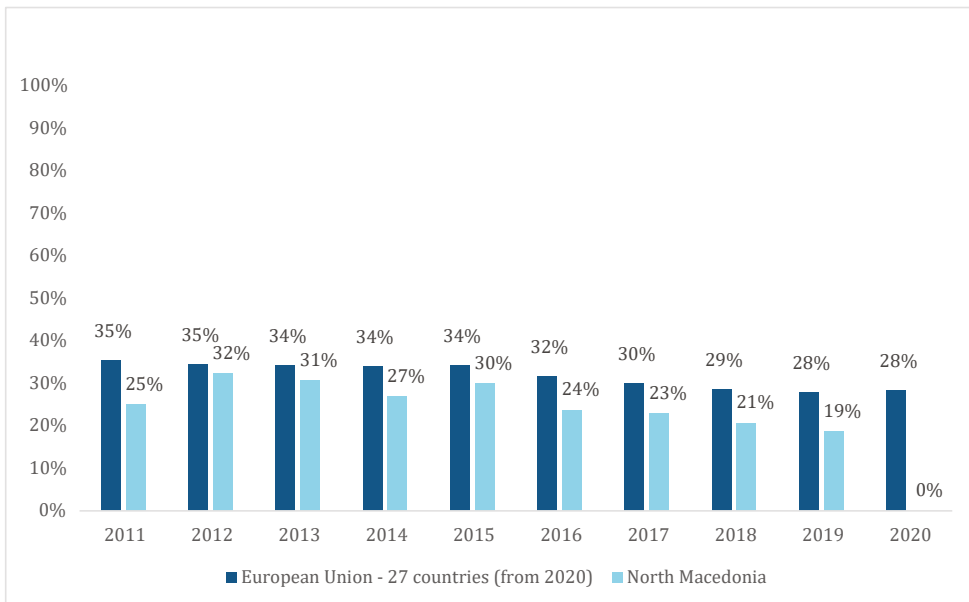


Figure 8

Source: Eurostat, EU-SILC survey

Equal distribution of unpaid care and household work

Share of unpaid care work and paid work in total women’s and men’s work, 2014/2015

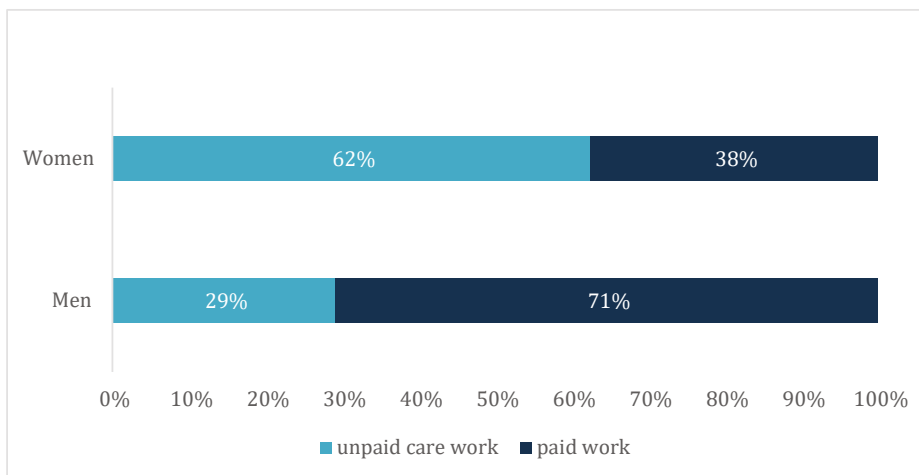


Figure 9

Source: Charmes, J. (2019). The Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market. An analysis of time use data based on the latest World Compilation of Time-use Surveys. International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2019. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3824AoA>. The author’s calculations are based on data in State Statistical Office (2015). Time use survey, 2014/2015.

Women’s and men’s share of total unpaid care work, 2014/2015

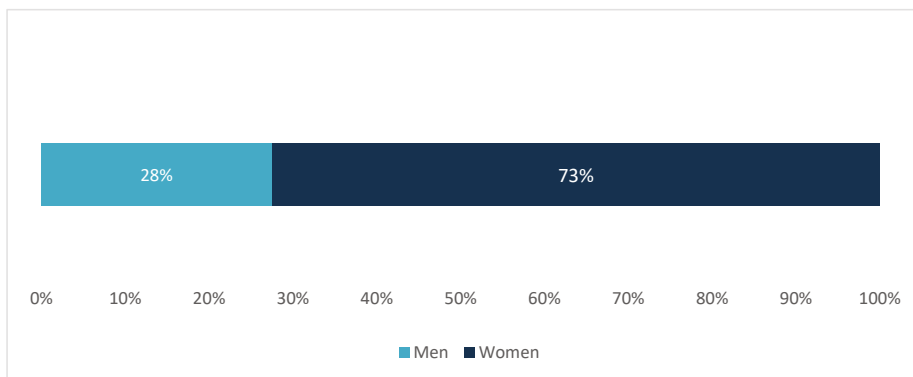


Figure 10

Source: Charmes, J. (2019). The Unpaid Care Work and the Labour Market. An analysis of time use data based on the latest World Compilation of Time-use Surveys. International Labour Office – Geneva: ILO, 2019. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3824AoA>. The author’s calculations are based on data from the State Statistical Office (2015). Time use survey, 2014/2015

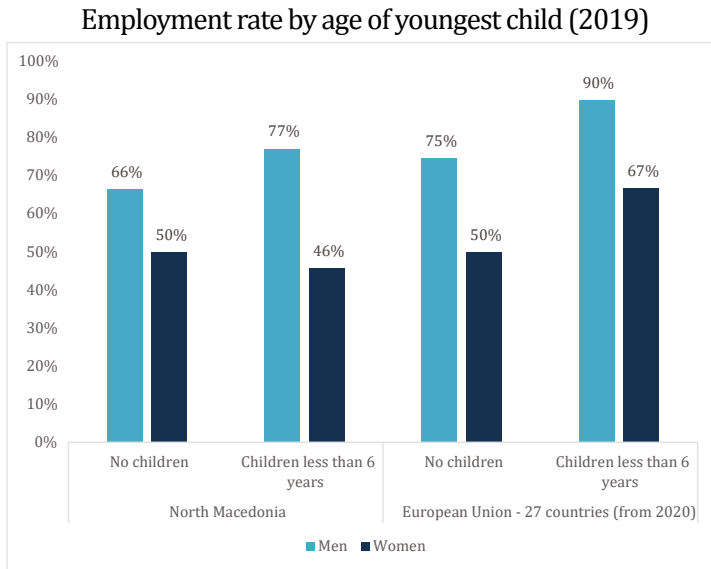


Figure 11

Source: Eurostat, Labour Force Survey
(data presented refer to age class from 15 to 64 years).

Inactive population due to caring responsibilities (aged 20 to 64 years)

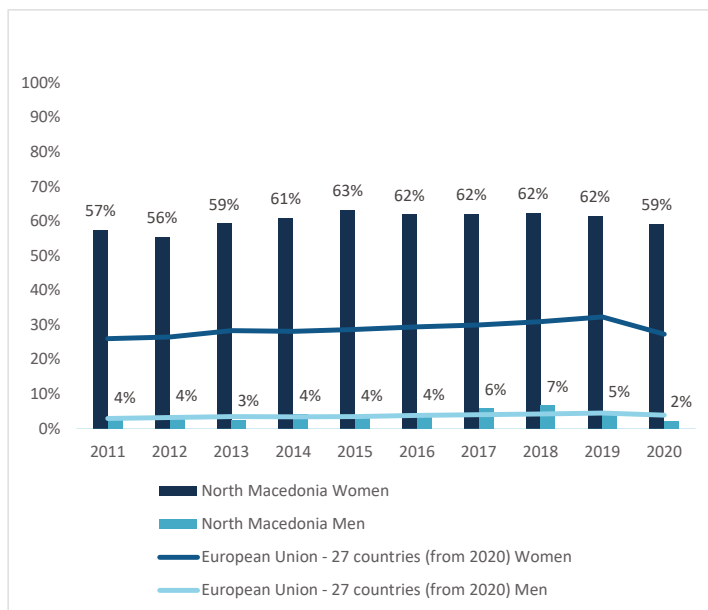


Figure 12

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey.

Equal education

Tertiary education rate

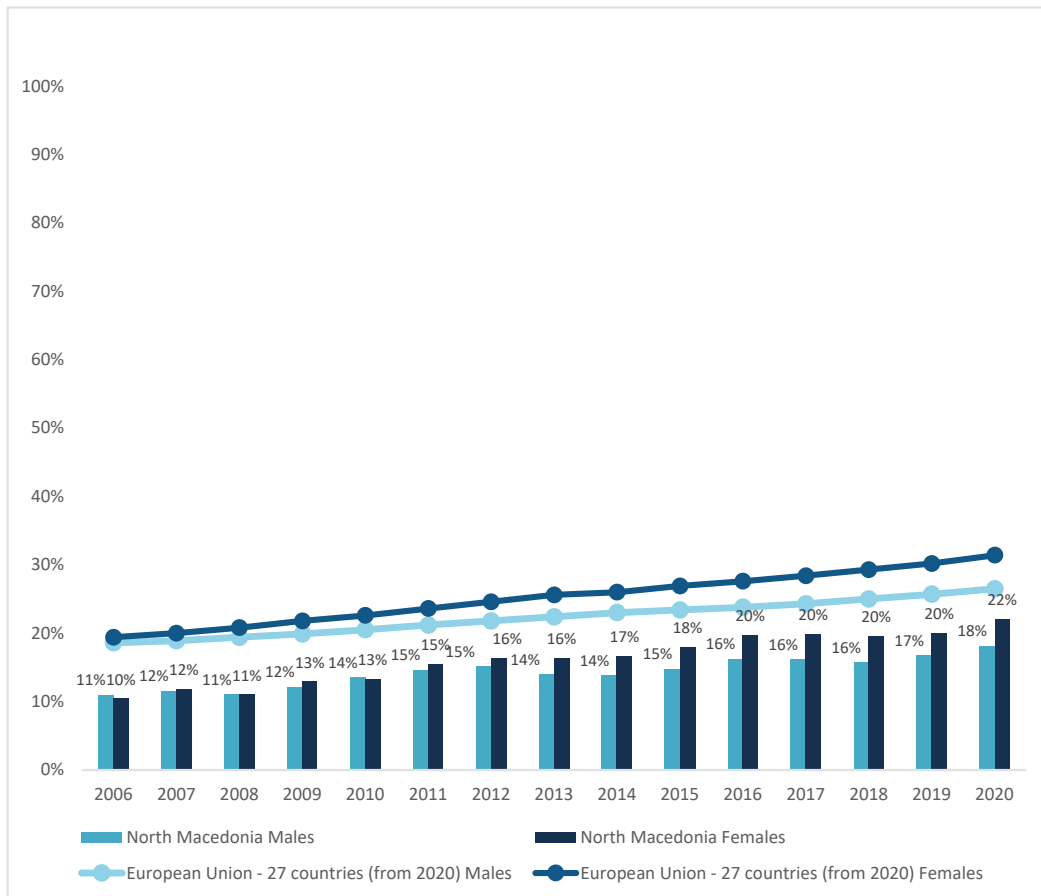


Figure13

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey.

Young people neither in employment nor in education and training

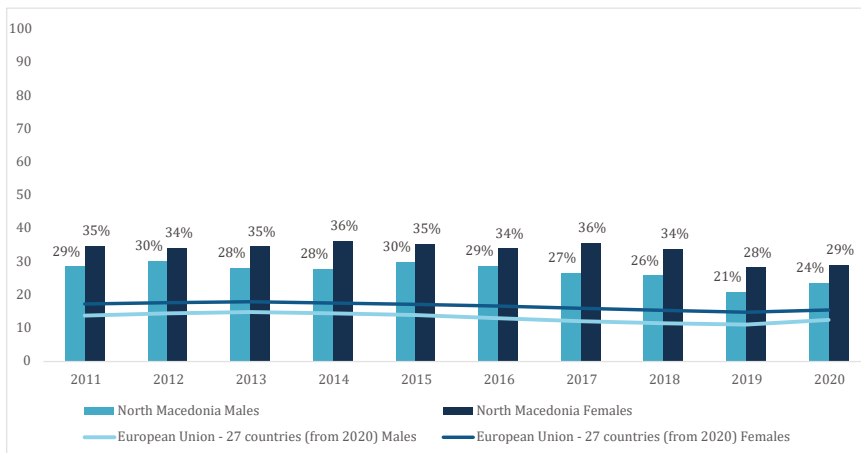


Figure 14

Source: Eurostat, European Labour Force Survey

Life expectancy

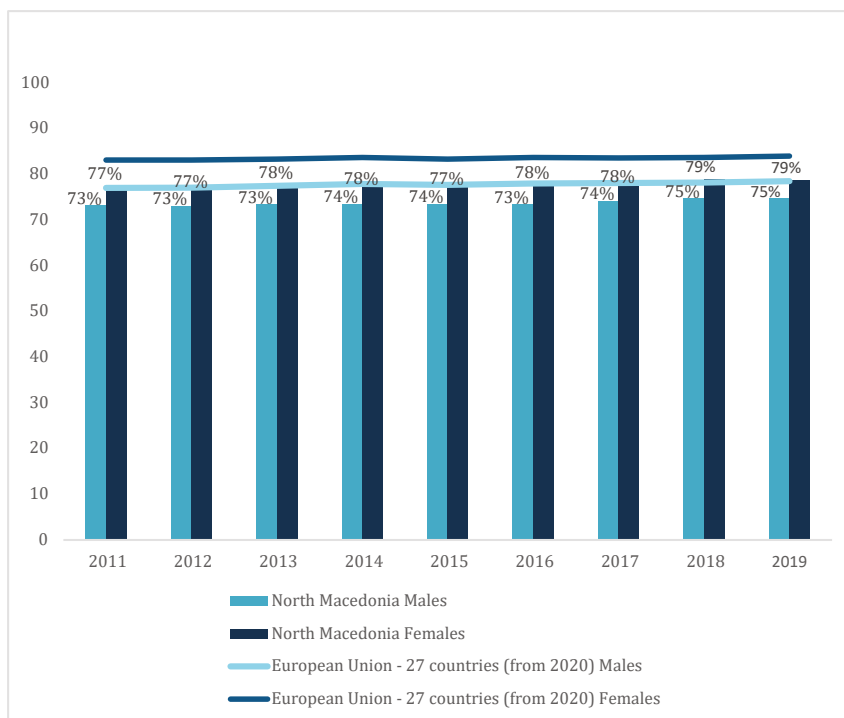


Figure 15

Self-perceived health ('bad' or 'very bad' answers)

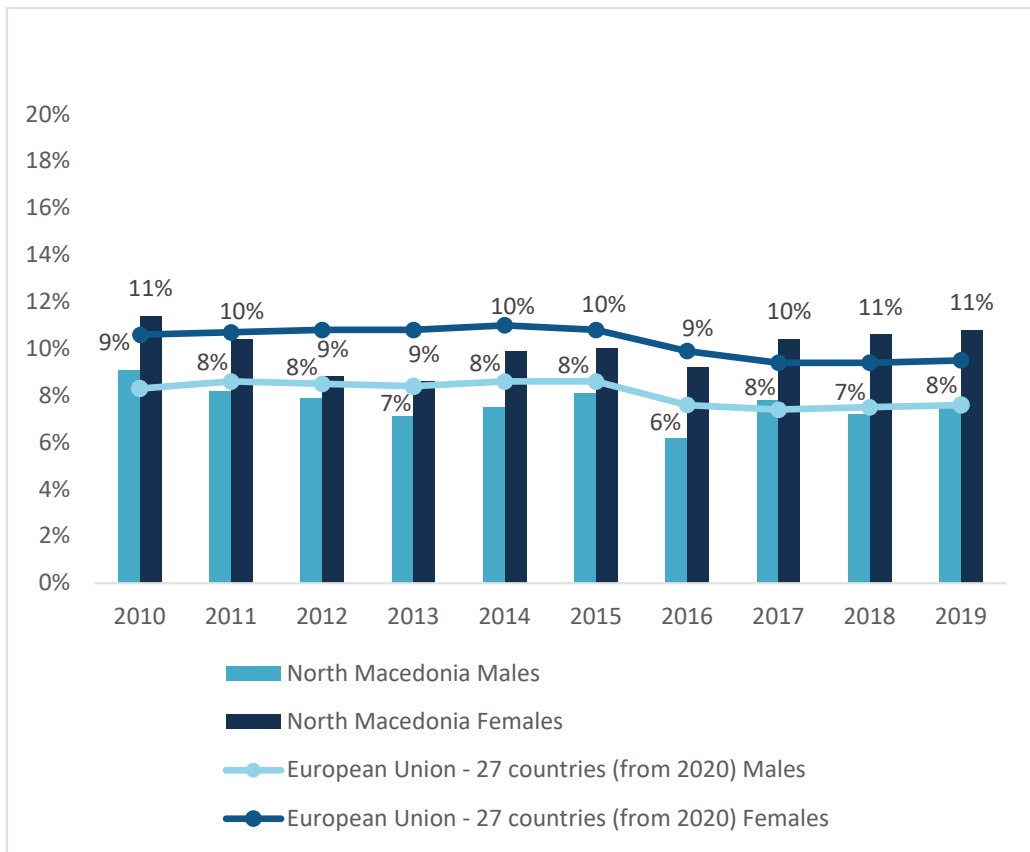


Figure 16

Men's violence against women must stop

Criminal offences committed in aggravated circumstances of domestic violence.

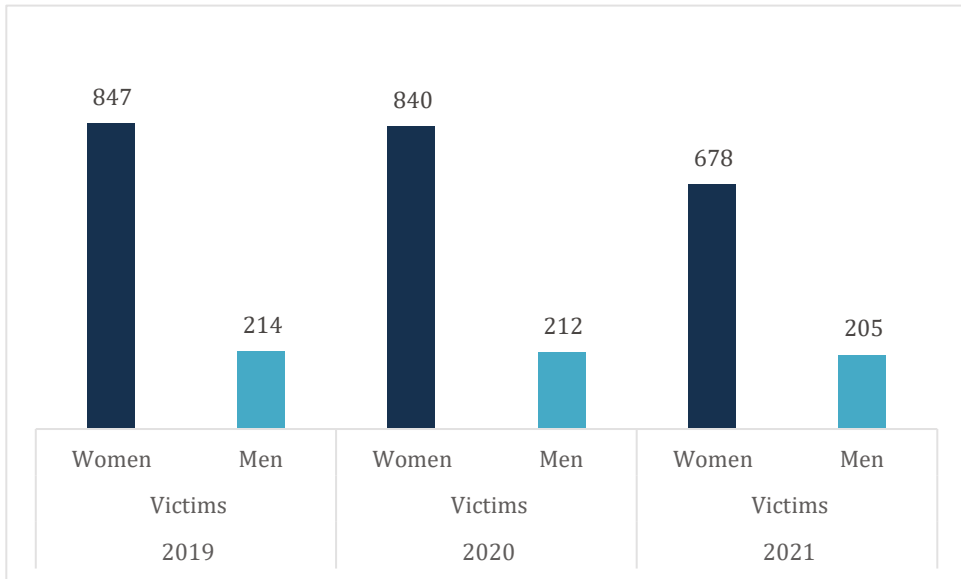


Figure 17

Data based on Freedom of Information requests from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Crimes related to domestic violence include murder, attempt for murder, bodily harm, grievous bodily harm, security threats etc.



North Macedonia

2022

